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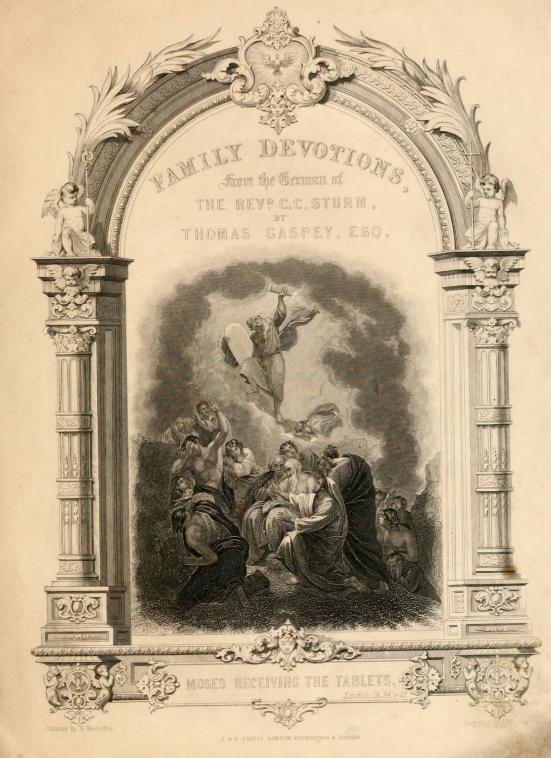
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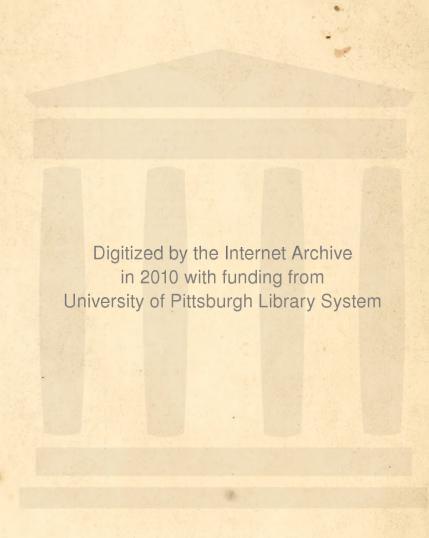


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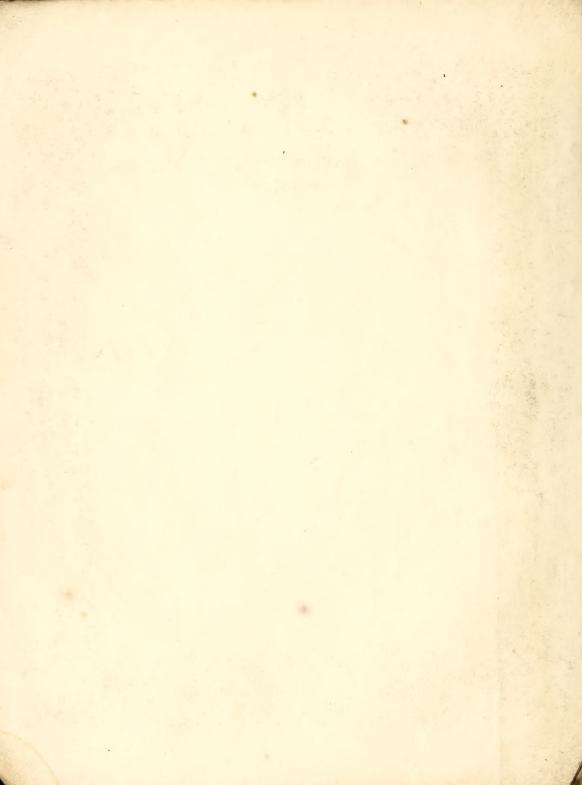


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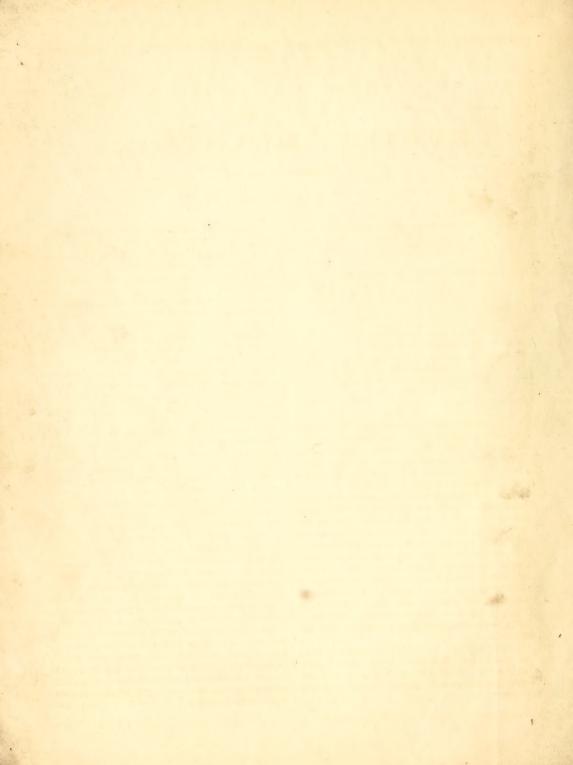








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# FAMILY DEVOTIONS.

## THE NEW YEAR

And now, my soul, another year Of thy short life is past; I cannot long continue here, And this may be my last.

Awake, my soul! with utmost care, Thy true condition learn: What are thy hopes, how sure, how fair, And what thy great concern?

Now a new scene of time begins, Set out afresh for heaven; Seek pardon for thy former sins, In Christ so freely given.

Devoutly yield thyself to God. And on his grace depend; With zeal pursue the heavenly road, Nor doubt a happy end.

Burder's Collection.

The hour of midnight has arrived. This minute separates the year which has closed from that which now opens. The sound of the bells seem the knell of the departing year, now lost in the ocean of eternity. Be it our care to dedicate the first moments of the new year to God.

This day is memorable, as marking the rapid flight of time, and as that on which the Saviour was submitted to the baptismal rites of the Jews, which may bring to our recollection the obligations imposed on us by the Christian faith. On this day the Saviour was named Jesus, by the express command of the Most High. Largely indebted as we are to the merciful benevolence of the Redeemer, let us firmly resolve from this hour. that it shall be our constant aim to live through the present year, as well as through those which may follow, among the humble worshippers of His holy name.

Creator of man! Lord of all! we desire to offer our grateful adoration before thy glorious throne. To thee, the Great Eternal, our eyes and our hearts we fain would raise in the spirit of true devotion.

For all the transgressions which we have committed in the past year, against our fellow creatures or against thee, we implore forgiveness. "Enter not into judgment with us," and regard with compassion our weakness. Confiding in the merits of the Saviour, O Lord! we crave pardon for the past, and strength to avoid a repetition of our errors in the days that approach. Should it be thy will that our lives shall reach their termination in the present year, we trust it will be ours to die in the well-founded hope, that we shall not be objects of thy future wrath; but if thou seest we are as yet unprepared, let thy mercy grant us longer time. If barren till now, we trust, by thy mercy, nevertheless, to bring forth good fruit. To thee—to thee in Heaven, our hearts appeal

for consolation and support.

To what mighty changes may we be exposed! The new year—the future—Eternity—lie before us. But all is subjected to thy government, and thou, O God, art good! Pity thy creatures, enlighten men by thy wisdom; grant the bondsmen release: permit superstition no longer to hold them in darkness, and let freedom and rational joy prevail. Let persecution for religious differences, too long the unhallowed source of extended misery, be known no more. While looking up to thee, Our Father, with dutiful love, may we glow with brotherly affection for our fellow creatures, and prove ourselves sincere Christians by a virtuous and rational course of life. Dispel ignorance; let thy light shine on all who are in doubt, and for those who have wandered from the right path, be graciously pleased to enable them to retrace their steps. Console the afflicted in sickness and danger. and cheer the dying with a lively prospect of a blessed eternity. Thou only canst guide us into paths of peace, and to thee, O God, who canst accomplish all that thy creatures can require, and more than they can imagine, be praise, gratitude, and everlasting glory.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 1.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
Towards heaven, thy native place.
Sun, and moon, and stars decay,
Time shall soon this earth remove;
Rise, my soul, and haste away
To seats prepared above.

Rivers to the ocean run,

Nor stay in all their course;
Fire ascending seeks the sun,

Both speed them to their source:
So a soul, that's born of God,

Pants to view his glorious face;
Upwards tends to his abode,

To rest in his embrace.

Cease, ye pilgrims, cease to mourn,
Press onward to the prize;
Soon our Saviour will return
Triumphant in the skies:
Yet a season, and you know,
Happy entrance will be given;
All our sorrows left below,
And earth exchanged for heaven.

Burder's Collection.

#### THE CREATION .- GEN. CHAP. I.

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
4 And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided

the light from the darkness.

5 Ånd God called the light day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament; and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven: And the evening

and the morning were the second day.

9 ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas; and God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: and it was so.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD. '

What momentous reflections does the advent of a new year invite! It is pregnant with instruction, forcibly reminding us that this state of being is only one of probation, and that every passing day brings the pilgrim nearer to his eternal home.

If we look round on the mighty works of His hand, they must satisfy us that from Him all good proceeds. All cometh from God, the Universal Father, who is love! Of this all the past supplies conclusive evidence, nor less the present, in the important advantages which minister to our bodily Shall we then look forward to the future with trembling dismay, however naturally anxious our solicitude? Is it for sinful mortals, such as we know ourselves to be, to claim unalloved happiness on earth; are we worthy of the grace of God; are we entitled to his blessing? But ought doubts of the future, or the uncertain tenure of life, to have any terrors for us, whom the blood of a dving Saviour has redeemed, and who rest in full assurance that the day is coming which will bring glorious proofs of the reality of things unseen?

Parent of all! thy word is truth. O let it be thy pleasure to conduct us into that path which is the true road to everlasting joy! We commit ourselves to Thy guidance, whose knowledge and goodness governest all things, granting with an indulgent and bountiful hand all for which we pray which ought to be granted. Our hopes rest on thee; thou wilt not suffer them to be confounded! Bending with deep humility, (but still with hope and confidence,) to thy inscrutable decrees, we truly feel that thou only knowest

what is really for our advantage.

Strengthen us, O God, in thy wisdom, that the experience we gain of thy ways may enlarge our faith, and tend not only to our comfort in this life, but to our eternal salvation. Avert not thy face from us, O Lord, but give to us new energy, that we may be grateful, joyous, and serene, in our days of prosperity; resigned, determined, and devoid of fear, when overtaken by calamity-bearing in mind our grand—our immorta ldestinies: and though severely tried by the sorrows which must be encountered in this state of being, we will, with Thy aid, advance with an undaunted spirit, satisfied that all the afflictions we may here experience are trifling, compared with that felicity which will ultimately be ours, if we, submitting to the visitations reserved for us with fortitude to the end, humbly bow to Thy will, firm in the conviction that the all-wise and good will, in his eternal kingdom, duly requite those who have "fought the good fight," and rely with confidence on his merciful Providence, and the merits of his son, Jesus Christ, to be received when this contest shall end, as the recognised heirs of glory.

# EVENING .-- JANUARY 1.

## THE SPIRIT'S CRY.

My faltering lips in vain essay,
Almighty!—thy supernal name;
By thought opprest I cannot pray,
Much less thy wondrous love proclaim.
With strength beyond his wonted might,
Satan my cries would stifle still,
My spirit cloud in saddest night,
And question e'en thy saving skill!

He tells me sin is at my heart,
And that there lies no faith in prayer;
He bids me from thy courts depart,
Nor shed my fruitless sorrow there.
But I will pray, and I will weep—
Ah, would my tears were blood like thine,
Redeemer!—for, though sin be deep,
Thy mercy's boundless as divine.

"I came not," blessed words! "to call Repentance from the righteous breast; I came to loose transgression's thrall, And ease the heart by guilt distrest!" Such were thy words, Redeemer! Mine The sinner's thrall, the heart of guilt; Oh, break my bonds, my soul refine, For still on Thee my hopes are built!

E. Roche.

#### THE SPIRIT .-- ROM. CHAP. VIII.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in home.

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and

travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit taself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to

his purpose.

# SURPASSING EXCELLENCE OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINES.

It has been ours to live through another day. For this added boon, O God, accept our thanks; but before we compose ourselves to sleep, let us subject ourselves to self examination, and ask if we have lived through the day as becomes real Christians. Thy Son, Gracious Lord of all, has set us an example; has marked the path in which we ought to follow. Was the goodness of God, through this day, our most favourite theme? Were not our minds carried away by the grovelling cares of the world? Were we as true followers of Christ ought to be-humble, patient, and unweariedly labouring to do good? We feel our deficiencies are great; that much is wanting before we can rejoice in being real Christians. Pity, O God, those weaknesses, which thou canst not but behold! We would fain appear less defective in thy sight. But living in a sinful world, we have to contend with bad examples and impure desires. Prone to wickedness as we are, it is only by thy grace that we can be reclaimed. If life be spared, O grant that we may improve and gain fresh knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus! By shunning evil, by steadfastly pursuing what is good, let us prepare ourselves for eternity.

Most divine is the doctrine of the Saviour. It were in itself a miracle did it stand alone; it unites man with God; it is the ladder by which we climb to Heaven. Such a doctrine could not be the invention of a mere human being; its author must have been versed in all the mysterious ordinances of creation,—and who could have possessed such knowledge but the Son of God? Where could wisdom like his be found; wisdom growing on a knowledge of the minutest details, as well as the most important concerns of our race, from the birth of Time. Who, like him, could in a few words solve all the most difficult problems in life, and at once astonish the wise and enlighten the ignorant.

We thank thee, O Gracious Father, for the faith taught by Jesus Christ. Dispose our hearts faithfully to observe his precepts; and let us, by manifestations of love and gratitude, prove ourselves worthy candidates for future bliss—for a joyous eternity.

## MORNING.—JANUARY 2.

#### THE WORKS OF GOD.

O Lord, our Lord, how wond'rous great Is thine exalted name! . The glories of thy heavenly state Let men and babes proclaim.

When I behold thy works on high,

The moon that rules the night, And stars that well adorn the sky, These moving worlds of light.

Lord, what is Man, or all his race, Who dwells so far below, That thou should'st visit him with grace, And love his nature so?

That thine eternal Son should bear To take a mortal form; Made lower than his Angels are, To save a dying worm.

#### THE CREATION .- GEN. CHAP. I.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day. 14 ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth,

18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. 20 ¶ And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the

earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living

creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth, after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon

the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon

27 So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and remale created he them.

THE NECESSITY OF WATCHFULNESS OVER OUR CONDUCT IN THIS LIFE.

Our destiny we cannot but feel is noble and exalted. The ceaseless changes and transitions of the world, even our own sensations; the brief period which in the course of nature we can remain on earth, the evanescent character of everything around us, all join to prove that we are to be immortal. The feeling thus kindled is strengthened by the reflection that we are of the number whom Jesus died to redeem. His sufferings, the atonement offered for offending man, prove that he is an eternal being. In this we exult, but our joy is abated by the mournful reflection that too many of our fellow creatures, to whom the same bounty is extended, waste in grovelling pursuits and sensual cares, the opportunities afforded to them of securing eternal

They are mournfully misled. O then be it ours to remember that the vain delights of this world are beneath the care of an eternal spirit, For man there are sublime joys in store. Let us not be drawn aside by the allurements of pleasure, to wander from that path which conducts to a blissful eternity. May that comforting hope sustain us in adversity, and enable us to rise superior to care or dismay, never doubting but the felicity we shall attain, when Death releases us from mortal thraldom, will indemnify us for every loss.

May we duly appreciate this advantage, and let us in our earthly career be mindful to employ ourselves in such exercises as promise to fit us for that higher condition to which we aspire. Mighty and Omniscient Author of the universe, what should we be if this were not revealed! But the feelings which it would inspire are often repressed by the cares and the enjoyments of this transitory existence. Deign to call forth and to sustain in us such thoughts and yearnings as are appropriate to our condition. Impart thy grace, that the importance of attending to eternity may not merely dwell on our lips but live in our hearts. For this let us solicit our Almighty Parent. Let us now, this day, reflect that we belong to a better—to an eternal world, and that every hour spent below, as it hastens the coming, ought in some degree to prepare us for the glorious change. Guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy mercy, grant, O God, that we may wisely employ our time, resisting unholy desires, submitting to pain with calm resignation, and elevated and strengthened by the reflection that we live here for eternity.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 2.

#### FAMILY WORSHIP.

O Lord! another day is flown, And we, a lonely band, Are met once more before thy throne, To bless thy fostering hand.

And wilt thou bend a listening ear
To praises low as ours?
Thou wilt! for thou dost love to hear
The song which meekness pours.

And, Jesus, thou thy smiles wilt deign, As we before thee pray; For thou didst bless the infant train, And we are less than they.

O let thy grace perform its part, And let contention cease; And shed abroad in every heart Thine everlasting peace!

Thus chastened, cleansed, entirely thine,
A flock by Jesus led;
The Sun of Holiness shall shine
In glory on our head.

And thou wilt turn our wandering feet, And thou wilt bless our way; Till worlds shall fade, and faith shall greet The dawn of lasting day.

H. K. White.

#### FAITH-EPHES. CHAP. II.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

#### MAN'S IMMORTALITY PROVED.

"Hitherto hath the Lord assisted us." Such is the language of Scripture, and such may gratefully be ours at the end of every year, month, week, and day. Hourly may we repeat the exulting words, and with them is bound up the cheering thought, that as he has hitherto assisted, his mercy will continue our support to the end. The evidence already afforded of his good Providence, supply ample assurances that we are the objects of his paternal love.

If we review that portion of our lives, which have already passed away like a dream, through

how many difficulties and dangers have we been carried by the divine aid. Fearful obstacles have been overcome; appalling wants removed. By Day and by Night the protection of the Almighty has been extended to us, and dreaded evils and threatening dangers have been turned aside. The Mornings have brought fresh proofs of his goodness, and these in the Evening have been renewed. He has conducted us from our childhood by the best paths; though sometimes dark, they have led us into cheerful ways. Do we not know then, from all the accidents of our existence, that God is mercifully disposed towards us-that our welfare is his care? Would that our own conduct had in every case been such that we could recall the past with delight, and look forward to the future with that confidence which belongs to a satisfied conscience. But the past cannot be recalled, and a thick veil conceals the future: let it then be our anxious endeavour worthily to employ the present. May our souls now rise above this world, and turn to him—the Mighty the Eternal! So shall we find peace of mind, that peace which will satisfy the best inclinations, and the noblest aspirings of our nature.

Great and adorable Creator! with unaffected reverence and humility we bend before thy awful throne, and worship thee as the author of our salvation. Pardon all our offences against thy ordinances, whether they proceed from weakness or a more blameable source. In thy mercies, O God, we rejoice! All thy doings prove thee a God of love. By thy favour have we been created and sustained, and by thy goodness we still live. To thee all our wants are known; therefore, with opening day, and at the close of night, when we rest on our pillows, thy goodness shall occupy our waking thoughts. Still will we cheerfully rely on thy unfailing goodness, for "Thou hast hitherto

assisted us, O Lord."

"Only let us be content to stay the time; and not to be thrusting in the sickle before the corn be half ripe. The husbandman, when he hath done his work in earing and sowing, doth not look to receive the precious fruits of the earth into his garners again the next day, or the next month; but he hath long patience for it; and whether it chance to be an early harvest, or a late harvest, he waiteth still, and taketh the season as it falleth. Even so have we need of patience, that after we have done the will of God, and suffered according to the will of God, we may receive the promised reward: for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not. The final reward is sure—it will come at last, and not fail us: and it is so great withal, that when it cometh it will abundantly recompense ail our work, yea, and our patience too."

Bishop Sanderson.

# MORNING-JANUARY 3.

GOD THE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

When God is nigh, my fate is strong; His arm is my Almighty prop: Be glad, my heart, rejoice, my tongue, My dying flesh shall rest in hope.

Though in the dust I lay my head, Yet, gracious God, thou wilt not leave My soul for ever with the dead, Nor lose thy children in the grave.

My flesh shall thy first call obey, Shake off the dust, and rise on high : Then shalt thou lead the wond'rous way Up to thy throne above the sky.

There streams of endless pleasure flow; And full discoveries of thy grace (Which we but tasted here below) Spread heavenly joys through all the place.

## CONFIDENCE IN GOD .- ISAIAH, CHAP. L.

5 The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back,

6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

7 For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

8 He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come

9 Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

10 Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

## GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN.

Our adoration is due to the Almighty, for having bestowed upon man a soul capable of enjoyment, and destined to be immortal. Small as we are compared with those shining bodies, which move unceasingly through the sky, yet how vastly superior must we feel ourselves, when we reflect that they can neither know their own beauty nor adore the goodness of their creator. Every object we behold in the animal or vegetable kingdom, proves the power of the Supreme Being; but still more strikingly does the spirit which animates us, proclaim, O God, thy greatness and Omnipotence! We know thee, and know that we are created in thy image. Grant that our souls may duly feel their own importance, and justly value the mighty boon. This is our duty. How favoured are we to be capable of acknowledging our Creator, and

of attesting that the spangled heavens, that the beauteous earth, and all that it contains, attest the supremacy of the Universal Parent. To feel this, really to feel it, is a privilege—is happiness. Be it ever our delight to avow it with reverence.-To acknowledge the true God, and his Son, our gracious Mediator, ought to be our chief employment, as it is the perfection of wisdom. The love manifested for the human race, by the merciful mission of Christ, passeth all understanding. Feeling its momentous importance, let us offer the tribute of our praise. In every comfort be it our desire to confess the bounty: in every affliction the chastening love of the father. Ought we to do other than love him, who manifests such unfailing kindness for us?

Such are now our feelings, but how often are our senses dulled; how often have we reason to deplore our cold insensibility! The bosoms which ought to glow with exulting thankfulness remain unmoved. How culpable is this indifference; how deficient in dignity and reason must we be as rational beings, that thy gracious invitations should be slighted! Too often have we abused thy benefits. Bending before thee, all-wise Creator, with appropriate penitence and shame, we trust, henceforth, to welcome the manifestations of thy bounty with affectionate transport, and through what remains of our earthly career, to prove ourselves less unworthy of thy goodness and thy care.

We humbly hope that even the present day will not pass over, without some clear indication of thy continued favour. That we still breathe, move and live—live for heaven, proceeds from thee. the fountain of all goodness. But still further evidence of thy beneficence we trust to receive. O let thy patience bear with our infirmities, thy love succour our weakness, and thy good Providence watch over our existence, while our hearts beat with an animated desire to prove their sincerity and faith by the careful accomplishment of good works. Jesus will still be our advocate, and what more is needful from thy inexhaustible love! Should suffering be our lot, teach our hearts even in this to recognise thy bounty, and to submit with patient resignation. In all circumstances, grant that we may see thy guiding hand, and cheerfully submit to thy dispensations with unabated reverence. Should it be thy good pleasure that this day introduce us to the eternal world, O! sustain us to the last, that with unshaken faith in the merits of our Redeemer, we may tranquilly

pass from earth into that state of being in which all sublunary anxieties are dismissed, to know and to adore thee will be the consummation of blessedness.

"O! DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING."

"The business of a Christian," says Dr. Watts, during his last confinement, "is to bear the will of God as well as to do it. If I were in health I could only be doing that, and that I may do now. The best thing in obedience is a regard to the will of God, and the way to that is to get our inclinations and aversions as much mortified as we can." Mr. Parker noted the following expressions as they fell from his lips: "I should be waiting to see what God will do with me. It is good to say, as Mr. Baxter, 'What, when, and where God pleases.' If God should raise me up again I may finish some more of my papers, or God can make use of me to save a soul, and that will be worth living for. If God has no more service for me to do, through grace, I am ready. It is a great mercy to me that I have no manner of fear, or dread of death: I could, if God please, lay my head back and die without terror, this afternoon or night. My chief supports are from my view of eternal things, and the interest I have in them: I trust all my sins are pardoned through the blood of Christ. I have no fear of dying; it would be my greatest comfort to lie down and sleep, and wake no more."

# EVENING.—JANUARY 3.

GOD'S GREATEST BOON.

Sing, earth, in verdant robes array'd,— Its herbs and flowers, its fruit and shade; Peopled with life of various forms, Of fish, and fowl, and beasts, and worms.

View the broad sea's majestic plains, And think how wide its Maker reigns; That band remotest nations joins, And on each wave his goodness shines.

But oh! that brighter world above, Where lives and reigns incarnate love! God's only son, in flesh array'd, For man a bleeding victim made.

Thither, my soul, with rapture soar! There, in the land of praise, adore; The theme demands an angel's lay—Demands an everlasting day.

Watts.

KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST .- JOHN, CHAP. II.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.
47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art

the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

CHRIST ALL SUFFICIENT.

By thy grace, Mighty Creator and Father, we have passed in safety through another day. Before we sleep, to thee we desire to offer the tribute of our gratitude. It shall also be our task to subject ourselves to a rigid self-examination; to ask, with all sincerity, have we through the day, now verging to its close, deported ourselves as true Christians ought before our fellow men and before thee, the good Supreme? By thy Son, Jesus Christ, the path which we ought to pursue has been distinctly marked. If we humbly make it our anxious study to tread in his footsteps, we cannot go wrong. Let us ask ourselves, were thoughts of the bounty of our Heavenly Father constantly present to us? Amidst the distracting occupations of life, did we not forget God? Have we constantly coveted to imitate the Saviour, to be like him, meek and abstemious; resolute, but resigned; indulgent, yet discriminating; disinterested and unwearied in doing good? Alas! we feel much—much are we deficient. We must compass much more than we have yet accomplished, before we can feel that our hearts are really animated by the love of our Redeemer, and that we are Christians indeed. May a gracious Deity look down in compassion on his erring children! Fain would we, Oh God, thou knowest it, present ourselves before thee less imperfect than we now are. But living in a wicked world, surrounded by awful examples of impiety, we cannot, without thy aid, always protect ourselves against impure thoughts, and the thousand seductive temptations which assail virtue. Such as we remain, we are through thy goodness alone, and through that we hope for the time to come to be less debased than we are now. Through thee our souls may improve. If it be thy pleasure that our lives shall be prolonged, Oh! grant that we may know more and more of Jesus, and feel ourselves more and more fitted for eternity. May we shun whatever is wrong, and eagerly seek the right. To this end be all our thoughts, all our hopes directed.

We feel the beauty and importance of the doctrine of the Saviour. Even though it had not been established by the miracles which he performed, itself would be a miracle; a rising sun, dispelling mental darkness, an oasis in the desert. It is the sublime bond of union between man and God, the ladder by which we ascend to Heaven. By man it could not have been invented. How skilled must he who could have invented it have been in all the obscure ordinances of the creation.

Who could have attempted this before Jesus assumed mortality. Where shall we find wisdom like his, embracing at once objects the most minute, and subjects of the most stupendous grandeur, and connecting them with the simplest speech for the instruction of countless generations of men? Oh! who, like Jesus, ever supplied in such brief lessons an explanation of all the problems of life, astonishing the wise, and illuminating the ignorant, in glowing language, which, appealing at once to the heart, proves him our God, our Saviour, our judge, and our friend.

Accept our thanks, Eternal Father, for the faith which is in us. Let us not prove unworthy of it. O may our bosoms burn with ardent gratitude, and while offering our adoration before thy throne, let us exult in the blessed assurance that our souls are saved. Thine—thine, we are O God, and thine through eternity we desire to remain.

## MORNING.—JANUARY 4.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE FOR MAN.

High in the heavens, Eternal God,
Thy goodness in full glory shines;
Thy truth shall break through every cloud
That veils and darkens thy designs.

For ever firm thy justice stands,
As mountains their foundations keep;
Wise are the wonders of thy hands;
Thy judgments are a mighty deep.

Thy Providence is kind and large,
Both man and beast thy bounty share;
The whole creation is thy charge,
But Saints are thy peculiar care.

Watts.

#### THE STATUTES OF GOD .- PSALM XIX.

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S COMFORT.

Placing our hope and trust in God, what can disturb those who happily know how to enjoy the present, be grateful for the past, and look forward to the future with humble hope? He knows our

wants, he can and will supply them. It is our consolation to know that he will not deny us what is really for our good. Shall we then look for happiness in a perishable world, and pass our days in vain sorrow for temporary affliction, when we are authorised to look up with confidence for comfort and support to our Father who is in Heaven. He determines what period of enjoyment we shall know, as well as the number of our days. Oh! then let our spirits exult, humbly bowing before the Universal Governor, whose wisdom and whose bounty orders everything for the good of his creatures.

Do we start when we contemplate the gloom of the dubious future? Will our friends desert us when we shall be old and feeble, suffering perhaps from the combined evils of incurable sickness and poverty? Away with such desponding thoughts He who directs the planets in their course, and controuls the tides of the ocean, has also regulated our destiny, and what but good can be rationally expected from an all bounteous and Omnipotent Parent. Even should events occur to depress our spirits and afflict our hearts, shall we not still confide in him, assured that, in the end, what appears most discouraging will tend to our advantage. He chastens those he loves. We must submit to his decrees. Our fretful thoughts cannot arrest the march of that calamity which he wills us to encounter. Could our tears or our complaints mitigate the pains from which we shrink, is it certain that that would be for our ultimate happiness? Might not unbroken prosperity render us arrogant, cruel, and unmindful of God? Thus might we (our weak desires attended to), only secure our own eternal undoing.

Oh! let us leave the future to our God, confiding in his protecting care, and reposing in his perfect wisdom. He will grant that which is most suitable to our capacity, and we should have no anxiety but for our eternal welfare—for those treasures which are in Heaven. For us God has reserved a blessed immortality, which is secured to us by the merits and sufferings and blood of the Saviour. Let our conduct be worthy of our high destiny. Preserving a lively sense of the labours of Jesus Christ, and in the hope of a glorious consummation of his word, the future will be disamoded of peace, and even the opening tomb seem but the entrance to Heaven.

To thee, our Father and our God, we desire with one accord to offer our sincerest thanks for this blessed consolation. Our happiness here and hereafter rests with thee; and, remembering that our souls are comforted, satisfied that thou best knowest our real wants, from thee we will gratefully accept those blessings which thou mayest bestow, and contentedly drink of the bitter cup of sorrow, if such thy will; exclaiming in the language of our great Redeemer, "Thy will be done." So feeling, we must cheerfully move as thou shalt direct. Thou wilt sustain those who confide in thee. To thee we desire to consecrate our whole hearts. Thy goodness is to us all in all—in thee is our trust and our hope.

#### GOD'S BOUNTY ACCOUNTED FOR.

Conceive the universe to be one secure and rejoicing family: and that this alienated world is the only straved or only captive member belonging to it; and we shall cease to wonder, that, from the first period of the captivity of our species, down to the consummation of their history in time, there should be such a movement in heaven; or that angels should so often have sped their commissioned way on the errand of our recovery; or, that the Son of God should have bowed himself down to the burden of our mysterious atonement; or, that the Spirit of God should now, by the busy variety of his all powerful influences, be carrying forward that dispensation of grace which is to make us meet for re-admittance into the mansions of the celestial. Only think of love as the reigning principle there; of love, as sending forth its energies and aspirations to the quarter where its object is most in danger of being for ever lost to it; of love, as called forth by this single circumstance to its uttermost exertion, and the most exquisite feeling of its tenderness; and then shall we come to a distinct and familiar explanation of this whole mystery: nor, shall we resist, by our incredulity, the Gospel message any longer, though it tells us, that throughout the whole of this world's history, long in our eyes, but only a month in the high periods of immortality, so much of the vigilance, and so much of the earnestness of heaven should have been expended on the recovery of its guilty population. Dr. Chalmers.

# EVENING -- JANUARY 4.

LOOKING TO GOD FOR AID.

Eternal God, we look to thee,
To thee for help we fly;
Thine eye alone our wants can see,
Thy hand alone supply.

Lord, let thy fear within us dwell,
Thy love our footsteps guide;
That love will all vain love expel,
That fear, all fear beside.

Not what we wish, but what we want,
Oh! let thy grace supply;
The good, unasked, in mercy grant.

The ill, though asked, deny.
WITNESSES TO THE TRUTH—ISAIAH, CHAP. XLIII.

7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9 Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

## INDULGENT CARE OF THE DEITY.

What mighty things, O God, hast thou done for us! Great are the instances which we recognize of thy goodness; great was that love to all mankind, which gave thy Son, thy glorious Son, that those who seek salvation through him might gain eternal life. This thought affords reflecting minds the sweetest solace. Where is the mind that can fully comprehend so mighty an effort? where the one that does not feel there is something in it most wonderful and sublime. From the dim eye of mortality the work of salvation is veiled in sacred mystery, but so far as we can penetrate it, we feel it warm our bosoms with grateful admiration for thy greatness and thy condescending mercy. It satisfies alike our wants and wishes. The composition of the great luminary of the sky we cannot analyse and explainbut we can enjoy the cheering light and feel the genial warmth which it bestows; so we cannot fully comprehend the eternal decree which offered pardon to a guilty world, through the sufferings of our Redeemer; but we must find, when our meditations rest upon it, that it is identified with divine wisdom, tending to elevate our thoughts, and give the anxious heart repose. Were we bereft of the knowledge that Christ died for us: that he has paid the penalty of our transgressions. and made us eligible for eternal happiness, what grovelling, deplorable objects should we become! How fearfully might we then go astray, ignorant alike of the goodness of God and our own high destiny!

The consolations of the Christian are too rich—too soothing, to be lightly parted from, because some doubts overcloud the mind. This may, by the thoughtless, be deemed weakness,—to us it seems to approach the perfection of wisdom. Let the arrogance of human reason pursue it with foolish ridicule; to hearts duly awake to the importance of eternal things, it will ever prove a source of consolation and joy. Deign, Eternal Judge of all, to fortify our hearts, and strengthen them in the true faith against the sophistry of infidelity. By the merits of thy Son, we feel assured that we have been reconciled to our

Maker, and made the heirs of everlasting glory. This belief—this consolation—we desire to retain while we have breath. It will be our hope—our comfort in death. Thou wilt not reject the prayers which we offer with this impression on our souls. We feel assured, when we contemplate the magnitude of our sins, fearful as it may be, that our peace is made, if henceforth, to the extent of our ability, we endeavour to worship thee and fulfil thy will. Our sense of filial duty, we rest assured, is acceptable in thy sight. When pain oppresses, we are sustained by the cheering thought that it is not an indication of the wrath of an avenging Deity, but that it is an exercise to which, for our own ultimate benefit, we are subjected. We know, while we fix our thoughts on the future, that though a man die, yet shall he live; that all things, by thy mercy, will work together for our good, and that he who has sent his only Son to suffer for offending mortals, will not withhold what is really essential to our ultimate welfare. O! then let us exult in the goodness of a protecting God. With Heaven in view, the cares of earth fade into insignificance. All we see attests the goodness of our Heavenly Parent. Why have we been preserved through this day why are we moved to devotional meditation, while others seem to sleep insensible to his mercy, but that he regards us with favour. It is ours to know and to rejoice in the goodness of that Redeemer who died to save us-to gain for us a glorious immortality.

## MORNING.—JANUARY 5.

GOD ALL IN ALL.

Father! to thee my soul I lift, My soul on thee depends; Convinced that every perfect gift From thee alone descends.

Mercy and grace are thine alone, And power and wisdom too; Without the Spirit of thy son, We nothing good can do.

We cannot speak one useful word, One holy thought conceive, Unless, in answer to our Lord, Thyself the blessing give.

From thee, through Jesus, we receive The power on thee to call, In whom we are, and move, and live; Our God is all in all.

Burder's Collection.

#### MAN BUT A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS. HEBREWS, CHAP. II.

1 We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of

reward:

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the

world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saving, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him.

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over

the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for

every man.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

#### THE BOUNTY OF OUR CREATOR.

Celestial Father, how vast is thy munificence! It is not to be expressed, but it shall be the subject of our adoration. We cannot comprehend it in all its extent, but we feel our own nothingness. The more grovelling we know ourselves, the more exalted dost thou appear—the more astonishing thy goodness to men. What, O God, are we, that we should be so highly favoured! Formed of dust and ashes as we are, in the dust let us worship thy holy name, and with all our best powers make that goodness the subject of rejoicing which is the theme of the angels' song in Heaven. Filled with awe by thy Majesty, our souls know not where to begin to glorify their eternal author, or where to look for that point at which the strain of gratitude should cease!

Thy bounty we are inwardly assured has no limits; thy goodness no beginning; thy mercy no end. With man's immortal welfare thy thoughts were occupied even before the world was created. Thy good providence attended us when we first sprang into existence; still it watches over us, and what will it not do for our happiness hereafter. Mighty and Eternal Lord! who can appropriately celebrate thy goodness, and relate the

wonders which thou hast performed?

Naturally mean, helpless, and perishable, by thy grace and favour we become ennobled, powerful, and immortal. To ourselves we appear a miracle. Our souls,—those souls which fear, and love to honour thy goodness, we derived from thee—thine is the grant of immortality. By thy mercy it is that our spirits join to sing thy praise. All our faculties-all our energies-owe their existence and support to thee. Whatever we have been, whatever we now are, and whatever we may become in the fullness of time, or in a happy eternity, all is the gift of thy great goodness,

Feeling this, let us delight to dwell on the greatness and mercy of our Eternal parent. Let us express from moment to moment the gratitude due to him who has raised us from nothing to be what we are, and what we shall be hereafter. Never let us forget our original insignificance; never relax in our admiration of his majesty and power. But for these what could we have been, and but for his ever-watchful, compassionate care, what would avail even all we have received? His benevolence has advanced us in safety one day further in the path of existence. One morning has been added to the days of our pilgrimage, that we may make further preparations for eternity. Let us not fail worthily to second the designs of our Preserver. In all our doings we should seek to glorify him. Every thought we can form, every inclination we can know, should tend to that point. To him be the tribute of our gratitude offered for a satisfied mind; to him our homage, when his invincible arm snatches us from impending danger. To praise thee in spirit and in body, each being thy gift, is the wish of our souls, O God! Let not coldness of heart, or forgetfulness of benefits enjoyed, render us unmindful of our glorious benefactor. Guided by his divine wisdom, sustained by his protecting hand, and cheered by his soul-reviving smile, we may serenely advance, rejoicing in a kind, reconciled, and Almighty father!

#### THE BOUNTY OF THE ALMIGHTY.

Who is he that can number the perfections of God? Where can the being be found that has rendered him thanks sufficient for any one of his innumerable benefits?

He has unfurled the vast canopy of the universe, and has therein sown the most variegated and the most beautiful colours.

The earth, the sea, and the forests; the sun, the moon, and the stars, are the works of his creative power.

His infinite goodness embraces the world from one extremity to the other, and the firmament of heaven sinks under the pressure of his favours.

He causes delicious fruits to grow on a tender and fragile stem; he fills the interior of a reed with sugar, and from a

drop of water forms the dazzling pearl. By the benign influence of the rays of the sun, he has changed barren and sterile fields into orchards and gardens of

tulips and roses.

From the bosom of the clouds he causes abundant rains to fall and refresh the thirsty and drooping plants, and in the spring he arrays the naked branches with a dazzling garb of verdure and flowers.

For which of his benefits has man ever testified his gratitude? He who reflects on the thanks and praises which he owes his Creator, remains confounded at his own unworthiness.

He is prodigal of his gifts; but the greatest, the most inestimable of them, is that of having engraven on our hearts the blessed hope of a future life.

Avoid evil, for the master of heaven only admits into his beautiful regions the man who hates iniquity.

Persian Hymn.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 5.

ENLIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS.

Father of all, in whom alone We live, and move, and breathe; One bright celestial ray dart down, And cheer thy sons beneath.

While in thy word we search for thee, (We search with trembling awe;) Open our eyes, and let us see The wonders of thy law.

Now let our darkness comprehend The light that shines so clear; Now the revealing Spirit send, And give us ears to hear.

Before us make thy goodness pass, Which here by faith we know; Let us in Jesus see thy face, And die to all below.

Burder's Collection.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT IN TIME OF TROUBLE. II. CORINTHIANS, CHAP. IV.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not des-

troved. 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for

Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

# CELESTIAL COMFORT REVEALED IN MAN'S

Great and Heavenly Father of the human race, enthroned in light, mighty giver of all good, who art the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, our guardian and protector, while others thoughtlessly compose themselves to sleep, we desire to be found among those, who, at the close of day, offer up the tribute of their thanks for all the blessings they have known in its course, who implore thee to forgive the sins they have committed, and solicit thy continued protection through the This acknowledgment of thy coming night. goodness, and appeal to thy bounty, we have but too frequently neglected,—often as thy mercies have been felt like the glory of the noonday sun, or marked by the softness of the gently refreshing Now accept our humble outpourings in rejoicing thankfulness, for that thou hast vouchsafed to us health, saved us from danger, and not denied thy blessing to our undertakings. Pardon our trespasses, O holy father, and through this night guard us and all who are dear to our hearts, that no unlooked for calamity may assail their peace.

Since life rapidly passes away, while mornings and evenings successively vanish never to return, it becomes our duty to reflect that the hour—the moment-is fast approaching which must be our last on earth. Come when it may, under whatever shape it may present itself, and wherever it may be thy pleasure it should overtake us, we look to die in peace and comfort, relying on thy goodness, and the merits of our Redeemer. Night conceals surrounding objects beneath her sable veil, but reveals the unfailing lights of Heaven. This, to us, but images the grave, which, hiding the world from our fading sight, will disclose to our emancipated spirits the glories of a state of never-ending bliss, not to be attained in this state of being. Be with us, O God! while we live; lead us into the right way, that true piety may eventually conduct us to thy presence. Not for ourselves alone do we offer our supplication. To

all our fellow creatures grant those mercies which we presume to crave. Where shall we turn our thoughts but to our common father, whose grace and might are capable of carrying us through existence, so that we may accomplish the object for which we were created. Doing this, it is our anxious care never to forget that we were born for immortality; that after a few years of time on earth, it is permitted us to gain eternal joy in Heaven.

We acknowledge thee a God of love and mercy. nor dare to deny even when thy visitations were felt most severely, that goodness and mercy presided over the infliction. We feel that a father waits for us above the skies, a bleeding Redeemer at his right hand, and all the angelic host smile approvingly on us when we are engaged in devotional exercises. When the temptations of the world are successfully resisted, we pursue the path marked out for us by the Saviour of man. If we are oppressed with anguish, we may still feel that "God will wipe away all tears," and speak consolation to the woe-oppressed heart. Sooner shall a fond mother forget her child, than our heavenly Father cease to remember us, His bounty will endure for ever, as our Lord and our God, our father and our friend.

And oh! how sweet is the consolation which the true Christian knows in the hour of adversity, when he recalls the merits of his great Redeemer! Looking up to him, what can we fear? Our faith is not to be shaken—his promises will be fulfilled. In him—in him alone are peace and salvation to be found. What if we expire this night, have we not in him a gracious advocate, before the Sovereign Judge of all the earth? Through his merits eternal joy will be ours. Accept our thanksgivings, and hear our prayers, O Lord!

#### GOD'S CLAIM TO PRAISE.

Is lost in love! thou great philanthropist!
Father of angels! but the friend of man!
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born,
Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!
How art thou pleased, by bounty to distress!
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth! to favour, and confound;
To challenge, and to distance all return!
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
And leave praise panting in the distant vale!
Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due;
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.

Young's Night Thoughts.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 6.

#### REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

O God of mercy hear my call, My load of guilt remove; Break down the separating wall, That bars me from thy love.

Give me the presence of thy grace,
Then my rejoicing tongue
Shall speak aloud thy righteousness,
And make thy praise my song.

No blood of goats nor heifer slain,
For sin could e'er atone;
The death of *Christ* shall still remain
Sufficient and alone.

A soul opprest with sin's desert, My God will ne'er despise; A humble groan, a broken heart, Is our best sacrifice.

Watts.

# REDEMPTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE FORETOLD. ISAIAH, CHAP. LI.

4 Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

5 My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me,

and on mine arm shall they trust.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men,

neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

10 Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

11 Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12 I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son

of a man which shall be made as grass.

# CHRIST'S SUFFERING AND TRIUMPH.

Repairing with cheerfulness and zeal to the daily tasks, which duty to the Almighty and kindness for our fellow mortals impose, while of these we carefully acquit ourselves, to whom but the Saviour do we owe such happy feelings and devout inclinations? He has supplied a model for our

imitation, and traced out the route which leads to Heaven. Is it for us to complain of the trivial cares and slight annoyances which we feel when we recollect what Christ suffered, and suffered with unconquerable patience for our salvation? Can we feel shocked at the ingratitude of our fellows, when we reflect how infinitely greater was that ingratitude which the Redeemer experienced from the blindness and depravity of man? Though to-day it is ours to tread a rugged path, shall we repine when we reflect on the thorny way he had to pursue, to a horrible and ignominious death? When the faint heart shrinks with unworthy dismay, let it look to the bright example set by Jesus, to be guided, strengthened, and consoled. Let it cheer us, and more than reconcile us to our lot, to know that he did not disdain to assume mortality, to share our weaknesses and feel our sorrows. With such a pattern before us, what appalling perils can subdue our fortitude? Though fearful is the trial, and endless in appearance the woes and conflicts which we are fated to know, with that in our sight, our constancy shall not be overcome. The bitter tears, the lowly birth, the despised appearance of Jesus, debased as he was through our transgressions, should render such evils light, which otherwise might be insupportable.

Sublime Emanuel! what would have been our thoughts had we beheld thy misery and humiliation on earth, while angels raised glad songs of triumph to thy glory above the sky! For us great happiness is in store. We shall yet behold our Saviour's face. And if, when seen as a mortal, we could have shed tears of pity for his woe, how shall he rejoice while we gaze on him enthroned in heavenly splendour! O! thou who became man for our benefit and salvation, lead us on to that happy state in which we may be permitted to enjoy thy presence, and adore thy unspeakable goodness for ever! As thou for us didst not refuse to lay aside thy divine glories, for thee we would fain put away all ungodly wishes, all low desires. Teach us so to regulate our actions, that each of us may feel we truly live for thee. Grant that, as we approach the close of life, our confidence may increase, and let us be found among those who prove faithful to the end. On thy merits, on thy sufferings for us, we place all our hope. While life remains, the recollections of thy condescension and mercy shall strengthen our hearts in thy belief, and make them glow with devoted love. Let us raise joyous strains in

honour of the bounty of our God. To him, and to the Redeemer of mankind, praise, glory, and enduring gratitude, are most justly due from all our race.

#### GOD'S MERCY .- HIS GLORY.

He was the Lord of Hosts, and he is still what he was; but he loves to be called the God of Peace, because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of heaven. His mercy is the light of the creation, and it fills all the earth; and his mercy is a sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the deep; it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our fears, and in all the evils that we suffer. His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel; for all the world in the abyss of the divine mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burden nor confounded with numbers; and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnify this mercy for ever and ever; that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all felicity.

Jeremy Taylor.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 6.

#### DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH,

Into thine hand, O God of truth, My spirit I commit; Thou hast redeemed my soul from death, And saved me from the pit.

The passions of my hope and fear Maintained a doubtful strife, While sorrow, pain, and sin conspired To take away my life.

"My times are in thine hand, I cried, Though I draw near the dust:" Thou art the refuge where I hide, The God in whom I trust. Watts.

#### DEATH CONQUERED BY CHRIST .- JOHN II.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the

dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father,

I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a nation. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

15 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had

see the things which Jesus did, believed in him.

#### FRIENDS WILL BE RESTORED IN HEAVEN.

When the mourners who loved Jesus repaired to the Sepulchre in which his remains had been laid, "why seek ye the living among the dead?" demanded the attending angel, adding for their comfort—"He is risen."

"He is risen!" With what joy and reverence did the followers of the Saviour hear this glad announcement! The deeply afflicted disciples of Jesus, who found themselves as a sheep who had lost their shepherd, at hearing it recovered selfpossession, and resumed animation and hope.

The words "He is risen," were heard far and wide. Those who had pursued the meek, unoffending victim to death, listened with amazement and terror. Such a miracle they could ill comprehend. They attempted to deride it as a daring falsehood, and answered or accounted for it by saying the disciples had stolen the body. they supposed could not be refuted. They deceived themselves. The Saviour, risen from the dead, re-appeared in Galilee, and the song of the angels in Heaven, "He is risen," became the theme of a long, never-ending Christian jubilee on earth.

Let our spirits exult that he has risen. His triumph over death and the darkness of the grave is ours. His soaring from dust and corruption to his native Heaven, is the symbol of our future elevation, "when our earthly pilgrimage shall be at an end, and mortality has put on immortality."

The ressurrection of Christ was the grand consummation of his earthly labours. By the precepts he had given, the miracles he had performed, and the example which he had set, the seed of God's truth was sown; but as yet its growth was slow. Many doubted what they had heard, and by some of his most trusted friends the object of his great mission was but imperfectly understood. They had looked for worldly greatness; for the restoration of the throne of the Kings of Israel, and their emancipation from the Roman yoke, and the establishment of the Jewish people in glory, surpassing that of every nation in the universe. Such were their hopes; but they were told by Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Not to reign in mortal splendour, but to suffer and to die, that the truth of what he taught might be sealed with his blood, was the painful task which the Messiah took upon himself. A willing sacrifice, he offered himself for the sins of the world, and with his death the sacrifices enjoined under the law of Moses were to end. He was

crucified to redeem mankind, and his blood was as it were to give vitality to the seed which God had sown in the human heart.

The courage of his disciples had failed when they saw their master put to an ignominious death; the ideas of worldly exaltation in which they had indulged were no more, and their hopes sunk in startling doubts or mournful despondency.

How glorious was the sound, "He is risen." Then, the important truths which he had taught were duly comprehended, and his divinity recognised without reserve. Then was Death robbed of his sting, Hell vanquished, and the stupendous work which was to reconcile an offended Deity to his sinful creatures completed.

In him alone is salvation to be found. To rest all our hopes in him, to act righteous is to become like him, and to live in God, must be the

Christian's ambition.

Let the solemn joyous sounds, "He lives-He is risen," speak peace to every sufferer. Heartbroken father, thou pale disconsolate pilgrim, who mournest thy child snatched from thee by death; Poor sorrowing mother, who weepest over the grave of thy loved infant, vainly calling it from the grave, stay the course of thy grief. "Why seek the living among the dead?" The object of your care is not mouldering in the earth—it is in Heaven, in the arms of our Common Parent. The festival of the resurrection of Jesus images the accomplishment of our own escape from this Be comforted, fond, erring mourners! Jesus proclaims by his resurrection that death is no more. Your child lives, for Jesus lives, and God our Father lives.

"He lives—he is risen." Bereft husband, while sighing for thy vanished consort, why look to the sepulchre where the remnant of her mortal frame reposes? There her beloved form was laid. "But why seek ye the living among the dead?" Her immortal soul could not be confined in the grave. That has sought a resting place with God; God is with you, then mourn not that you are separated, since God clasps you both in his embrace.

He is risen; the Redeemer lives, and we, following him, shall be with God. The grave cannot retain me as its prey. We are all the children of a good and Omnipotent parent, and knowing this, it were weakness for a moment to despond.

In heaven we shall not only see our elder brother, Christ, but probably also all our kindred friends and relations, that living here in his fear, died in his favour. For, since our Saviour tells us that the children of the Resurrection shall be equal to, or like the Angels; who yet in the visions of Daniel and St. John, appear to be acquainted with each other: since, in the parable of the "Miserable Epicure," and the "Happy Beggar," the father of the faithful is represented, as knowing not only the person and present condition, but the past story of Lazarus: since the instructor of the Gentiles confidently expects his converted and pious Thessalonians to be his crown at that great day; when the having turned many to righteousness, shall, as the Scripture foretells, confer a star-like and immortal brightness. Since (which is chiefly considerable) the knowledge of particular actions, and, consequently persons, seems requisite to the attainment of that great end of God in the day of judgment, the manifestation of his punitive and remunerative justice: since I say these arguments, besides divers others, are afforded us by the Scripture; we may safely conclude it probable, that we shall know each other in a place where, since nothing requisite to happiness can be wanting, we may well suppose (at least, if we can imagine here what we shall think there) that we shall not want so great a satisfaction as that of being knowingly happy in our other-selves, our Friends.

Boyle.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 7

ADORATION AND GRATITUDE.

High on his everlasting throne,
The Lord of hosts his work surveys,
He marks the souls which are his own,
And smiles on his peculiar race;
He rests well pleased their toil to see,
Beneath his easy yoke they move,
With all their heart and strength agree
In the sweet labour of his love.

What can we offer thee, O Lord?
How worthily set forth thy praise?
Fain would we preach thy saving word,
And dying love in every place;
In thee believe, thee serve and love;
To thee our life, our all we owe,
Who dost 'midst danger us preserve,
And mercies numberless bestow.

O may our lives thy power proclaim,
Thy grace for every sinner free,
That thousands still may know thy name,
Humbly adore and worship thee:
Open a door, which earth and hell
May strive to shut, but strive in vain,
Grant that thy word may richly dwell
Amongst us, and our fruit remain.

Watts.

GOD'S ENDURING MERCY-PSALM CXVIII.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.
3 Let the house of Agron now say that his mercy endure

3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

5 I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. 6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear, what can man

7 The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: there-

fore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

8 It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in

9 It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. 14 The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my

15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles

of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. 16 The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of

the Lord doeth valiantly.

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

18 The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord:

28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, and I will exalt thee.

29 O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

## GOD'S GUIDANCE MAN'S ONLY HOPE.

When the mercy of the Supreme Being has surrounded us by so many proofs of his bounty, how can we remain neglectful of our duty to him! Yet do we often feel indifferent to the all-important affairs of the soul, and neither the precepts of holy men, who have been taught the truth, nor those of Christ our Saviour, are at the moment efficient to guide our stubbornness into the road which leads to peace and salvation. Too frequently have we neglected our best interests. Let us no longer weakly pause, but hasten to improve the new day by applying all our powers to seek the ways of God. May his good spirit direct our

It is only under the gracious guidance of the Most High, that we can hope to succeed. From no other source can we derive adequate succour. Oh! may the fainting spirit be animated anew by the example of those who are now in glory, and more especially by that of the divine Redeemer. who for our welfare passed through this dreary scene of joyless strife. Most thorny-most appalling was the path which he trod, yet with a willing heart did he obey the bidding of his Father. Shall we then tremble at the perils which beset our journey? No; it shall be our resolute purpose to imitate his courage and resignation. Though few our companions on the road, angels will attend us as fellow travellers, and the august Ruler of the universe himself be an approving witness of our toil. Thus sustained, we shall

know more true comfort than could be found in the walks of sinful pleasure. If painful the duties which devolve upon us as we advance, they will press lightly upon us, since we are enabled by grace to look forward to the pronounced recompense-eternal bliss.

With these views let us enter even this morning on a nobler career. May we be aided by the spirit of God! May his good Providence elevate our ideas, and confirm our best resolutions. Let fervent prayer excite fresh ardour. Strengthened by him, we will not suffer ourselves to be led away by the seductive allurements of a sinful world. O thou, who from above deignest to listen to the supplications of thy creatures, grant that we may be timely warned of those dangers which lead to death and perdition. Support us when we faint; re-assure us when thou seest that. left to ourselves, we should sink. Yet, in a few days, and we may be no longer sojourners on Whether this be so, or whether a longer course be reserved for us, may our God and Saviour, in either case, bless our labours, and afford us that devout frame of mind, which may fit us for, and conduct us to, everlasting bliss!

#### NECESSITY OF BEING HUMBLE AND WATCHFUL.

There is a vanity that accompanies health, that we can scarce persuade ourselves that we shall ever be sick or die: we cannot put another estimate of our condition than we do at present enjoy, especially if it be pleasing and delightful. To wean myself from this impotency of mind, although it had pleased thee to give me a strong and healthy constitution, yet I often put myself into the imagination and supposition of sickness; thoughts of my mortality abstracted myself from my present condition of life and health, and pre-apprehended sickness, diseases, old age, infirmity, and death; and by this means broke and scattered my confidence of long life, continued health, and took up thoughts of becoming a sick, infirm, or dying man; considered how my accounts stood, if God should please to call me away, how I could alienate my mind from the world; what patience I had to bear pain, and weakness, and sickness. In my most entire and firmest health, it was my care so to order my life and actions, as if the next hour might despoil me of my life and health too; I did not, durst not allow myself in any considerate practice of any known sin, in procrastination of my repentance, in a toleration of passions, upon a supposition of a continuance of life, or of an unshaken health; but still cast with myself would I do thus, were the firmness of my health, or the thread of my life to be broken off the next hour? My firm and strong constitution made me neither proud nor presumptuous, but the frequent interpositions of the thoughts of my change kept me humble and watchful.

Sir Matthew Hale.

#### THE SOUL CONSTANTLY IN DANGER.

I am persuaded that the longer I live in this world, the more my eternal welfare is daily endangered, and that my soul can never be in safety till it is disengaged from this corruptible body, and united to thee, Oh my God! King James the Second.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 7.

"FORGIVE OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS."

A supplicating voice we raise, Our Maker's pity to implore; Oh! may he teach our hearts his ways, And bid us "go and sin no more."

If his indulgence we would see, This thought must in our bosoms live, The Saviour taught that we should be "Forgiven, as others we forgive."

It is the great Creator's rule To favour mortals who are kind; And "blessed are the merciful, For they from God shall mercy find."

GOD DEFENDS AND REWARDS THE RIGHTEOUS. II SAMUEL .- CHAP. XXII.

2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; 3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my Saviour: thou savest me from violence.

4 I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so

shall I be saved from mine enemies.

21 The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed

22 For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not

wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his judgments were before me: and as for his

statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye-sight. 26 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

27 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury.

28 And the afflicted people thou wilt save, but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down. 29 For thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness.

## THE MERCIFUL SHALL FIND MERCY.

It is one of the blessings of Christianity, that it contributes to make us individually and collectively full of divine contentment. Our Saviour has obtained for us forgiveness of our sins; the reconciliation he effected with our God disposes us to enable others to taste of the same enjoyment. What a world would this be if all men loved one another as they have been loved by their Redeemer! Alas! instead of that we see envy, jealousy, and unhallowed rancour, dividing brother from brother, turning aside the bounty which God designed for their nourishment and mutual comfort.

All are sinners before the Most High. He who should say he is without stain, knows not the state of his own heart. Dazzled by self-love and vain pride, he sees not how often he has trampled on God's holy laws, nor remembering how many evil desires he has cherished, besides the sinful deeds he has committed. These duly borne in mind, the leaves on the trees, the hairs of his head, nay, the drops of the ocean, or the sands upon the sea shore, would hardly appear to out-number them. Yet, countless as the offenders' misdeeds are, God is prepared to pardon them all, for the sake of the atonement offered by our Saviour. To him then be our petitions humbly preferred, for the aid, indulgence, and mercy, so essential to our salvation.

But let it not be absent from our thoughts, that we are instructed to pray that he will "forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who trespass against us." If implacable to others, can we hope to find our own transgressions overlooked? While breathing bitter hostility against offending fellow mortals, with what face can we claim a full pardon for our own sins from the Father of all? To gain compassion we must shew it. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy." May we learn to regard our foes as the Redeemer of the world looked down upon his! What-what, O God, would have been our present situation, if thou hadst shewn no more forbearance towards us, than we have in some cases manifested for our fellow creature? Accept our sincere acknowledgments that thou hast not entered into judgment with us on account of our deviations from virtue, but, on the contrary, that thou hast listened to our tardy supplications, and granted us remission of sins for the sake of our divine intercessor, Jesus. should be our care to prove ourselves not utterly unworthy of this saving clemency, by cultivating a disposition in our hearts to pardon those by whom we have been wronged, persecuted, and betrayed. We owe it to him, who spares us to live in charity with every one, and in the true spirit of Christianity to avoid, if possible, making any one our enemy. If this day we have encountered those who pursue us with malice and cruel hostility, let us, ere we sleep to-night, breathe for them our heartfelt forgiveness. Nor should we forget that it is our solemn duty to be on our guard against entertaining unjust suspicions of those about us. They whom I accuse of injuring me, may possibly not have intended the wrong of which I complain, but if deliberate malice be

proved, O still let our hearts be tranquil, and looking up to the example of our Saviour, indulge in no frantic thirst for revenge. Difficult is the task to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us, but this is a labour which, as devout Christians, we must endeavour to perform.

Listen to our prayers, and assist us in these our devout resolves. We have all sinned so deeply that we are no longer worthy to be regarded as thine, but redeemed, as we gratefully feel, by the sufferings of our Lord and Saviour, even from thy chastening hand we look for new evidences of thy paternal favour, and commending ourselves to thee, thy blessing and protection, through this night we humbly, reverentially, but confidently implore.

## HUMILITY BECOMES THE CHRISTIAN.

An humble man hath no such great value for himself, as to think he is to be exempt from calamities; and therefore is not much startled at the approaching of them: he reckons he hath portion enough in this world, if he can keep his innocence, the peace of his conscience, and quietness within; as for matters of the world, as he makes not their enjoyment the object of his hope, so he makes not their loss any great motive of his fear; God's will be done, is the language of his soul in relation to them. Is he threatened with the loss of his estate, of his friends and relations, of his honour and esteem, and hath he the news of his death, either from without, by violences or persecution, or from within by the forerunners of it, sickness or old age? yet he is by no means tormented with fear by these messengers.

The evenness of his own mind furnisheth him with the opportunity and use of his reason to check his fear as vain, foolish, and unserviceable passion, that may torment him, and by present anticipation make his present condition worse and

more troublesome, but not cure the danger.

The sense of his subordination to the divine power and pleasure, quiets his mind with this thought: My Maker wants not power to rescue me from the danger, if he please; but if he be not pleased, it is my wisdom and my duty to submit to his good pleasure; it is the Lord that doth inflict or permit his will be done. Sir Matthew Hale.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 8.

AID FROM ON HIGH.

Tired with the burdens of the day, To thee I raised an evening cry: Thou heard'st when I began to pray, And thine Almighty help was nigh.

Supported by thine heavenly aid I laid me down, and slept secure : Not death should make my heart afraid, Though I should wake and rise no more.

But God sustained me all the night: Salvation doth to God belong He raised my head to see the light, And makes his praise my morning song. Watts. GOD OUR DELIVERER .- PSALM CXVI.

1 I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I

beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt

bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. 10 I believe, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.

11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.

12 What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

#### THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

Oh! what is man, great Maker of mankind! That thou to him so great respect dost bea That thou adorn'st him with so bright a mind, Mak'st him a king, and even an angel's peer?

Oh! what a lively life, what heavenly power, What spreading virtue, what a sparkling fire, How great, how plentiful, how rich a dower Dost thou within this dying flesh inspire!

Thou leav'st thy print in other works of thine, But thy whole image thou in man hast writ; There cannot be a creature more divine, Except, like thee it should be infinite:

But it exceeds man's thought, to think how high God hath raised man, since God a man became; The angels do admire this mystery, And are astonished when they view the same.

Nor hath he given these blessings for a day, Nor made them on the body's life depend; The soul, though made in time, survives for aye; And though it hath beginning, sees no end.

Sir John Davies.

## THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

Omnipotent Creator, conscious that thou seeest us, to thee we address our prayers, assured that thou wilt not reject them, nor disregard sorrow. We have the felicity to know that even in the profoundest solitudes thou art near, and that we are ever in thy sight. Yet justly may we feel alarmed at the reflection, that all the weaknesses of our hearts are exposed to thy searching glance.

We tremble for the wickedness that must then be detected. It cannot be denied or concealed. We can only throw ourselves upon thy mercy. Bestow thy grace upon us, attend to our complaints, and regard with indulgence our wishes and our griefs.

This day we feel that we are standing before thee. All our words, actions, and thoughts must be known. We contemplate thy omniscience with awe. May it ever be present to our minds. Nothing can prevent it but the vain lusts of the world, and an ungovernable propensity to wander from the right path. Oh, may thy grace vanquish our sinful inclinations, and keep alive in our bosoms the salutary reflection that we are constantly in thy presence.

That conviction will render every moment precious that we can pass in communion with thee. O may it accustom us to the constant exercise of virtue. How will the worn spirit be cheered, when it can feel that it has obtained thy favour! When it is ours to comfort the afflicted, we shall feel that every tear wiped from the eyes of the widow or the orphan, will be known to thee, and we in due season receive our reward. Though unseen by the world, every devout aspiration, every victory gained over our sinful passions, will be known to God. So let us feel assured that when we suffer in secret our anguish is not unknown to thee, our Heavenly Parent, and will not be coldly neglected. In this thought there is comfort. shall it ever part from us? Can we ever again forget thee? No, we will always bear it in remembrance, and constantly appeal to thy goodness. Satisfied of thy loving kindness, we may rest assured that with whatever difficulties we have to contend, all will eventually tend to our welfare. Though our way may be gloomy, in the conviction that thou watchest over our safety, as Christians we shall rejoice. Thy benign Providence will grant all we really need to the close of our lives. Thy goodness and mercy we acknowledge here, and to all eternity our thanks shall be offered to our God and our preserver.

# EVENING .-- JANUARY 8.

PRAISE FOR TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

We bless the Lord, the just, the good, Who fills our hearts with joy and food; Who pours his blessings from the skies, And loads our days with rich supplies. He sends the sun his circuit round, To cheer the fruits, to warm the ground; He bids the clouds with plenteous rain, Refresh the thirsty earth again.

'Tis to his care we owe our breath, And all our near escapes from death; Safety and health to God belong; He heals the weak, and guards the strong.

Watts.

CALL TO GOD'S TEMPLE .- PSALM LXV.

1 Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. 3 Iniquities prevail against me, as for our transgressions,

thou shalt purge them away.

4 Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

# THE INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH.

For the blessed institution of the Sabbath let us offer our heartfelt thanks to God. How wise are the aids which he has designed to strengthen Christians in their journey through life, to assist their understandings, and to solace them in distress! On this day, by his wise ordination, millions imbibe health and comfort, while enjoying repose. Our gratitude is due to him for that we are able to improve it, by withdrawing from the bewildering anxieties of life, devoutly to raise our thoughts to the fountain of all good, and to assure our faith, by edifying communication with pious and enlightened minds. For giving us thy divine word, Almighty Father, we offer our humble acknowledgments, since by that we are directed to the true wisdom, which leads with unerring certainty to a blessed immortality. There we read of Jesus Christ, and there we learn to know our own hearts. Do we not feel its cheering influence, when it draws us from worldly trifling to holy aspirings, gives us courage to encounter peril, and fortitude to endure pain? Great and Eternal Creator, many thou knowest have been the sorrows which our hearts have proved, but these we have happily surmounted, through constant reliance on thy paternal support. Still be a light in our path, to guide us in our journey through this world, and graciously be pleased to purify our hearts and enlarge our minds, that we may fully comprehend the truth, value, and importance of the Christian doctrine. Suffer us not to be barren listeners to its momentous announcements, but let the practice of our lives be in accordance with its teachings. Grant, that the good seed sown in our

hearts, may take root, spring up, shew itself in all our doings, and bring forth fruit a hundred fold. May we constantly walk in fear of thy displeasure, hoping, by the strength of our faith, by acts of charity, and a blameless life, to win thy approving smile. For the institution of baptism and the sacrament, we desire to offer our thanks. May we, and all our fellow mortals, duly bear in mind the numerous blessings which as Christians it is ours to enjoy; and never forget the high and important duties which they impose. May those who have this day solemnly commemorated the death of the Saviour, and who have partaken of the bread and wine of immortality, find their faith strengthened and their hearts cheered, and glowing with benevolence and love! God grant that Christianity may be found not merely a profession of faith; a matter of form; but a law ever revered and august; unceasingly animated by the spirit of charity and the love of truth. For the glorious gift-for the mighty privilege of prayer, accept, O Lord! our dutiful homage. Can there be a nobler exercise of human powers, than to offer up adoration to the God who gave us being? So engaged, do we not feel ourselves lifted above sublunary cares, and momentarily taste, by anticipation of celestial happiness? May the means of grace, placed before us, prove efficient to save us from all sinful backslidings; may our thoughts become more elevated, our bosoms cleansed, and our lives sanctified.

These blessings we implore, not, O God, for ourselves alone, but for all Christians, for all our fellow creatures. We mourn that countless multitudes still remain in the darkness of sin, the slaves of sensual delights. O! that the benign and saving influence of Christianity may prevail, and reclaim to happiness and virtue the whole human family! To this great end, endow those who undertake to be thy ministers with power, that they may announce thy high desires with appropriate energy and corresponding effect. So shall immortal souls be timely reclaimed. May they prove themselves thy faithful followers, and may those who listen to their devout exercises derive from them the sweetest consolation; faith in thy promises, and full reliance on thy goodness. We have now, O Gracious Creator, arrived at the close of this hallowed day. Vouchsafe, that from the way in which we have spent it, we may profit For all our wants thy bounty has eternally. abundantly provided. From this our reason tells we may draw the just inference that our temporal

and eternal welfare will still be the object of thy gracious care. To thy abounding love and mercy we commend ourselves, as also those who are near and dear to us, nor these alone, but if we may so far presume, mankind generally. For us thou hast done much. For all the wonders thou hast performed, divine author of our being, accept the homage of grateful hearts, tendered with all humility, and grant, that, avoiding the snares of earth, we may close our days in peace, and finally gain a place among the spirits of the just made perfect in thy blessed presence, O God!

#### PROPER OBSERVANCE OF THE SARRATH.

I would not have you meddle with any recreations, pastimes, or ordinary work of your calling, from Saturday night, at eight of the clock, till Monday morning. For though I am not apt to think that Saturday night is part of the Christian sabbath, yet it is fit then to prepare the heart for it.

Rise at least three hours before morning sermon; and when you have made yourself fully ready, and washed, and fitted yourself for the solemnity of the day, read two chapters in the bible, and then go solemnly to your private prayer, and desire of God his grace to enable you to sanctify his day: and after your private prayer, read another chapter, and let your reading be with attention, observation, and uncovered on your head.

When you are in the public worship and service of God, be uncovered all the while of reading, praying, or preaching, and if the weather be too cold, wear a satin cap.

Kneel upon your knees at prayer. Stand up at the reading of the Psalms, and at the first and second Lesson, and the Epistle and Gospel, the Hymns and Creeds; so you shall avoid offence, and give the same honour to every part of the Holy Scripture: but stand not up at reading of any Apocryphal book, if any happen to be read.

Sit at the Sermon, and be very attentive at your prayers, and in your hearing, I commend your writing the Sermon, especially till you are one or two-and-twenty years old, because young minds are apt to wander, and writing the Sermon fixeth

them and maketh them more attentive.

When the minister readeth any of the Psalms or Lessons, turn to them in your Bible, and go along with them, it will fasten your attention, and prevent wandering thoughts.

Be very attentive and serious at Church, use no laughing, nor gazing about, nor whispering, unless it be to ask those by you something of the Sermon that you slipped in writing.

Sing the singing Psalms with the rest of the congregation. After Sermon, eat moderately at dinner, rather sparingly than plentifully upon this day, that you may sit for the after-

noon's exercise, without drowsiness or dulness.

Walk half an hour after dinner in the garden, to digest your meat, then go to your chamber and peruse your notes, or recollect what you remember of the Sermon, until it be church

If you are well be sure you go to Church morning and afternoon, and be there before the minister begin, and stay till he hath ended: and all the while you are at church, carry

yourself gravely, soberly, and reverently.

After evening Sermon, go up to your chamber and read a chapter in the Bible; then examine what you have written, or recollect what you have heard; and if the Sermon be not repeated in your father's house, but be repeated in the minister's house, go to the minister's house to the repetition of the

In all your speeches or actions of this day, let there be no lightness nor vanity; use no running, or leaping, or playing, or wrestling; use no jesting, or telling of tales or foolish stories, no talk about worldly business; but let your actions and speech be such as the day is, serious and sacred, tending to learn or instruct in the great business of your knowledge of God, and his will and your own duty.

Sir Matthew Hale.

## MORNING.—JANUARY 9.

#### SALVATION BY CHRIST.

Salvation is for ever nigh The souls that fear and trust the Lord; And grace, descending from on high, Fresh hopes of glory shall afford.

Mercy and truth on earth are met, Since Christ the Lord came down from heaven; By his obedience, so complete, Justice is pleas'd, and peace is given.

Now truth and honour shall abound, Religion dwell on earth again, And heavenly influence bless the ground, In our Redeemer's gentle reign.

Watts.

## THE LAW AND ITS OPERATION. ROMANS III.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.

## TO PRAISE GOD THE DUTY OF MAN.

How truly grateful ought we to be, O God! when, remembering thy greatness, we contemplate all the benefits which by thy love we are permitted to know, within the compass of a single day!

Thy power and thy indulgent love are conspicuous While we know that we are but everywhere. dust and ashes, how can we dwell upon the extent of thy goodness, without deeply feeling our own lowly condition? and feeling our unworthiness, how can we refrain from exclaiming with the Psalmist, "Lord, what is man, that thou regardest him!" In ourselves we exemplify the power of God, that teaches us the duties we have to fulfil, enables us under suffering and privation to cherish hope, and bids us exult in a prospect of happiness in the world to come. All the connexions which are dear to us, all the comforts we enjoy, we owe to God, and especially the advantages of being born in a Christian land: without that, what would all other benefits have been?

We are filled with grateful amazement, O Lord, when we reflect what, through thy bounty, we have become. From a mean and grovelling estate, thou hast raised us in the scale of creation, to enjoy the dignity of human nature. Our poverty has been converted into riches-from nothingness we are elevated to rank among the heirs of immortality; we, who of ourselves have no claim on thy love. Thy compassion through Jesus Christ has made us what we are. The homage of our lasting thankfulness is due to thee, O Father! for thy unbounded goodness. Ever may we recall it, and extol the Giver of all good; may our hearts be always eager to adore thy holy name. But what are we, that thou shouldst deign to accept the poor tribute of human adoration, while immortal angels are hymning thy praise above the sky! Infinite Being! even now prostrating ourselves before thy throne, we experience a sublimer joy than all the ordinary delights of life could impart. To us it is happiness to know that thou art our bounteous protector, and that thou wilt not enter into judgment with thy offending children. O God, still may it be ours, through what remains to us of time, to meditate on thy greatness and our own weakness. Grant us requisite courage to encounter the difficulties of life, and bestow upon us capacity to make a proper use of it, that becoming more and more humble in spirit, and more deeply imbued with gratitude, we may feel still stronger assurance of thy future mercy. Our. imperfections, our weakness of body, our dim perceptions, prove us not originally entitled to such favour, but thou hast graciously bestowed it upon us as members of the redeemed family of thy Son, our Lord. He has given us a claim on thy paternal care, and to thy forbearance, of which.

as offending sons of Adam, we were wholly unworthy. This mighty boon we gain through the Saviour of mankind. To him we owe the privilege of calling the Creator of the world our Father, and of seeking from his unutterable love the blessed recompense for earthly sorrow, held out to us in a joyous immortality. Be it the height of our ambition to prove ourselves faithful to him while we breathe: but it is only when we ascend to heaven, that we shall appreciate in all its richness the noble and truly God-like gift which we have received from the sufferings of Jesus Christ for the redemption of mankind.

# EVENING .-- JANUARY 9.

## SALVATION BY CHRIST.

Lo! what a glorious Corner-Stone The Jewish builders did refuse; But God hath built his church thereon, In spite of envy, and the Jews.

Great God, the work is all divine, The joy and wonder of our eyes; This is the day that proves it thine, The day that saw our Saviour rise.

Sinners rejoice, and saints be glad: Hosanna! Let his name be blest! A thousand honours on his head, With peace, and light, and glory rest!

In God's own name he comes to bring Salvation to our dying race; Let the whole church address their King With hearts of joy, and songs of praise.

Watts.

#### RESURRECTION OF JESUS. LUKE XXIV.

13 Two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, what manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them that were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to

believe all that the prophets have spoken:
26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to

enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and break, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures.

#### CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

When Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to two of his disciples, who were journeying to Emmaus, a town situate but a short distance from Jerusalem. They did not recognise him; but he entered into conversation with them, and discoursing on the Scriptures, his lucid explanations of doubtful passages, and generally his impressive exhortations, filled them with admiring wonder, and caused their hearts to "burn within them." From converse with him they derived the sweetest consolation. When they drew near the place at which they were to part, reluctant to lose one who could so ably instruct, they prayed him, as the evening was near, not to leave them. He gratified them, and entered the dwelling to which they directed their steps. There he partook of the sacrament with them, and this done he appeared before them in the form, so well known, of their beloved Master, who had recently suffered an ignominious death. They knew him, and while they fondly gazed, he vanished from their sight. Great was the amazement of the disciples, while they recalled what they had seen, and the wonderful things which had been addressed to them by their Lord. To each other they eagerly appealed for the deep impression which had been made on them by his conversation. Such must every benighted soul experience when first "led out of darkness into marvellous light," when first the

growing understanding appreciates all the importance and the excellence of the Christian doctrine. The simple dignity of the precepts of Jesus are pressed on the mind with irresistible force, and the breast expands with joy, with gratitude, and love.

We should turn this interesting and affecting narrative to advantage. Applying it to our own case, let us reflect that we have lived through another day. The sun has set, darkness veils the face of creation, and night, which from its gloom is said to be unfriendly to man, now reigns. It is not to be denied that during the hours of darkness, we are surrounded by many perils, of which, at the moment, we cannot be exactly apprised. Still may it be regarded as a blessing, and as a consoling friend. While it refreshes the weary frame, it invites the soul to solemn meditation on eternal things. And ought we to feel alarmed, when He still watches over us to whom darkness and light are the same, and who,

"Light in himself, in uncreated light, Dwells awfully retired."

the source of all wisdom, strength, and happiness, We humbly address our prayer to thee, O God, at the close of this day, thanking thee for all the good we have known in its course. Pardon the weaknesses into which unhappily thy erring children may have been betrayed during its progress. To thee it is known that our bosoms swell with thankfulness for thy love, and that they covet not to seek aught that may be displeasing in thy sight. To thy all-seeing eye it is manifest that we desire to become wiser, and more what beings of thy creation should be found, than we have yet been. Give effect, O Lord, to our virtuous resolutions, and strengthen us to labour with unwearying care for their fulfilment. Without thee we can do nothing: with thy Divine assistance, what is there to which we are not equal?

Be with us, O Lord, and all belonging to us, during the night. Though the sun has sunk from our view, for us there is a shining star of celestial hope, that, defended by thee, we may feel secure from danger, assured that thy gracious love will order all things for our real benefit. By the gospel light remove farther and farther from us, from our families, and from our land, the works of the evil one. Make us, and all who with us are called Christians, to become really children of light. Save us from the dangers that may seek to assail us in the obscurity of the night; and if, before another morning, it is thy good pleasure that we should be added to the millions

who sleep in death, O deign, in the plenitude of thy mercy, to receive our parting spirits. We are the work of thy hands, O God, we are thine through our Redeemer's blood, and through him we are emboldened to claim immortal glory. Forsake us not, O gracious Father, but still be with us at all seasons, and sustain us in our last moments; forsake not, O Lord, those who humbly put their trust in thee!

CHRIST, THE FIRST-BORN OF GOD.

Christ may be sometimes called the Son of God, because of his resurrection from the dead, and his exaltation to universal dominion, by the peculiar favour and power of God. In this sense Christ is said to be "begotten of God," when he is raised from the dead; "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." And it is upon this account that he is called "the first-begotten of the dead," and "the first-born from the dead," though the Greek word is in both places the same, because he was raised immediately by God himself from the earth into eternal life.

Watts.

# MORNING-JANUARY 10.

PRAISE FROM EVIL DELIVERANCE.
I'll bless the Lord from day to day,
How good are all his ways?
Ye humble souls that use to pray,
Come, help my lips to praise.

Sing to the honour of his name,
How a poor sufferer cry'd;
Nor was his hope exposed to shame,
Nor was his suit denied.

When threatening sorrows round me stood, And endless fears arose, Like the loud billows of a flood, Redoubling all my woes.

I told the Lord my sore distress,
With heavy groans and tears,
He gave my sharpest torments ease,
And silenced all my fears
Watts.

GOD WILL SAVE HIS WORSHIPPERS. -PSALM XXX, XXXI.

3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. 4 Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his; and give thanks

at the remembrance of his holiness.

- 5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.
- 6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
  7 Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.
  8 I cried unto thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made

9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

10 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord be thou

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. 5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed

me, O Lord God of truth.

#### THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

And what's a life?—a weary pilgrimage, Whose glory in one day doth fill the stage With childhood, manhood, and decrepit age.

And what's a life?—the flourishing array Of the proud summer meadow, which to-day Wears her green plush, and is to-morrow hay.

Read on this dial, how the shades devour My short-lived winter's day! hour eats up hour; Alas! the total's but from eight to four.

Behold these lilies which thy hands have made, Fair copies of my life, and open laid To view, how soon they droop, how soon they fade!

Shade not that dial, night will blind too soon; My non-aged day already points to noon; How simple is my suit!—how small my boon!

Nor do I beg this slender inch to wile
The time away, or falsely to beguile
My thoughts with joy: here's nothing worth a smile.

Francis Quarles.

#### APPROACHING DEATH.

Every day we feel we have approached nearer to the hour of our departure from life. Possibly, though not suspecting it, we now stand on the brink of that tomb, into which, after a few days, nay, of a few short hours, it may be the will of the All-wise that we should descend. This, at all events, we know with certainty, that every time we look on the morning sun, we are further advanced towards the evening of life. At the thought we feel sadness, more especially when suffering the pangs of sickness. To apprehend death—to stand on the verge of the dreary sepulchre; how startling the thought!—yet there is no That we draw closer to it from week to week, admits not of a doubt. O that we were equally certain our peace is made with God, that we might steadfastly contemplate the coming final hour with joyful hope. So to feel would be happiness. We should then exult in being drawn towards him, as children hastening to a loving parent; but conscience sternly tells us this is not the case, and that, if our hours were now so few, that no time remained, we could only look forward to eternal misery.

This day we have looked on the rising sun for the last time, and have had an opportunity for appealing to thee which may never return. What! if in the midst of our supplications, the cold hand of death should now fall on us, and the first words that issue from our lips this morning, prove the last we utter on earth! O! how fearful is the thought, yet how speedily may it be realised to its fullest extent. How soon may a vital part of this exquisite, but frail organization, be deranged! A blood vessel may fail the next moment; we may expire, and, unprepared, stand before the judge of all the earth. Even in the passing hour, it has been ascertained by ingenious calculation, that in the ordinary course of mortality, four thousand of our fellow creatures must submit to the inevitable sentence, and cease to live on earth. Why, let us ask our hearts, may not some of us be included in the number who are so soon to fall? Even though it should appear that this computation is erroneous-at least we know that Death may come when least expected—when, perhaps, we are boasting of health, and looking forward to many years of mortal enjoyment.

It is the part of wisdom to learn from the ascertained uncertainty of the hour of our departure, to discipline our minds so that we may have it constantly in view. Doing this, we shall be all the better prepared for the dread summons—come when it may. Delay is fraught with danger, why then should we for a moment defer giving our undivided attention to a matter of such paramount importance. Let us not pause, but in this very moment, while we still possess our faculties, resolutely commence the momentous work of repentance. Now, this may possibly not be a task of vast difficulty. How much more severe may it be felt, if present opportunities neglected, we should grow old in sin. As yet we have reflection to command our thoughts; we are capable of solemn meditation, and we can humble ourselves before our Creator. We have it in our power to do good, and to make the fruits of our penitence visible to our fellows. How much more lamentable will our case be, when age or mental debility shall have overtaken us, if we turn not to virtue till we are incapable of action, and are at the point of death. The present moment is ours; will the next be ours also? Strengthen us, O God, in our devout resolves, that the feelings we now prove shall remain with us, to the end that we may duly improve any time that is yet to be allotted to us on earth. If, Gracious Father, thou seest we are this morning far from thee, may we, when the evening returns, enjoy the sweetly consoling thought, that we are somewhat nearer to thee and everlasting rest. Death will then lose its terrors, and when our emaciated frames are conscious that the last hour is at hand, we shall feel that we are not miserably perishing to moulder in the earth, but ripening for the everlasting joys of Heaven.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 10.

GOD'S GRACIOUS WILL.

Who can the wondrous works recount, Which thou, O God, for us hast wrought? The treasures of thy life surmount The power of number, speech, and thought.

I've learnt that thou hast not desired Offerings and sacrifice alone; Nor blood of guiltless beasts required For man's transgressions to atone.

I therefore come-come to fulfil The oracles thy books impart, 'Tis my delight to do thy will; Thy law is written on my heart.

Drummond's Collection.

THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE .- JOHN, CHAP. X, XII. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they

follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never

perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and

what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

#### PEACE OF MIND FROM CHRIST.

On one occasion our Redeemer thus addressed his disciples,-"these things have I spoken to you that you might have Peace. In the world ve shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

It behoves us to reflect how we may best comprehend the full import of these memorable words, "these things I have spoken to you that ye may have Peace." By peace in him, is meant not peace of body, but that happy repose which may grow on our attempts to imbibe his blessed spirit, and his divine exercises of thought, in connection with the world and with things not of the world. He desires that we may have peace, but peace with whom? Where peace is established there must have been disunion and discord. We may gain in Jesus peace with God the father, the greatest and most holy of all beings, peace, with consciousness of everlasting life with our own Man unredeemed lives in a state of enmity with God and himself. Through Christ, and through Christ alone, can he find a true reconciliation with an offended Maker, and that "peace of mind which passeth all understanding."

But our Immortal Preceptor truly tells, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." This world, be it remembered, is merely terrestrial, with which the soul can have no concern. The spirit is of a different nature. Here it is an exile—a foreigner -and it in vain seeks to accommodate itself to the objects it perceives. It cannot find repose—hence its eager and incessant longings for a higherhappier state of being. While it contemplates only this world, it never can be satisfied. To gain rest, its musings must be directed towards the Heaven it seeks to reach, and that wanting, its gratification must remain imperfect. Its wants are essentially spiritual. Such being the case, all temporal benefits must fail to appease its desires, and therefore it is that our Lord, the messenger from the Most High, instructs his followers, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Yet, with this solemn announcement, he fails not to mingle celestial comfort, as he adds, "Be ye of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." He has overcome its blindness and ignorance, as he has enlightened those who before were ill at ease, vainly seeking for happiness in earth-born joys and the paths of evil. He has assisted them with the light of God's eternal truth, and pointed out to them, that, sinking into the grave, the Christian shall not die, but will rise to eternal life, through faith in his name. Not for himself, but for us, has he overcome the world, for offenders buried beneath their countless sins, against the Majesty of Heaven. It is by lifting our regenerated souls above the vanities of life, above the mean, deluding cares of mortality, that he has overcome the world.

Those who desire to find, and will carefully seek

it, may find in Jesus peace.

Christ has made for us his momentous revelation, and given us his doctrine, that in him we may find peace. He is the true light that is to shine on our road. His is the way and the truth, and the holy life which leads to Heaven. It is our wickedness and our fatal wanderings that alienate us from the God who gave us being. Without a knowledge of the mercies of our Creator, the human heart cannot have peace, and Jesus alone can lead us to him. Therefore was the important task assigned to him; therefore shall his name be Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD, the ETERNAL PROTECTOR, the PRINCE of PEACE.

Son of God, thou who becamest mortal, to restore fallen man to his justly indignant Creator, even of us, now here assembled, hast thou condescended to think. There is no salvation for us; no peace on earth; no joy in Heaven, but through thy all gracious mediation. O light of life, conduct our trembling footsteps into the right path, that so we may reach the original source of being in glory. Suffer us not to wander from thee, for it is only with thee that we can hope for peace and lasting felicity. Let us act in thy spirit; then shall we have repose in thee, and feel assured of eternal life. Grant thy aid that we may accomplish this, Blessed Lord and Saviour.

## CHRIST ACKNOWLEDGED BY HEATHEN WRITERS.

That in such an age there was such a man as Christ, who preached such a doctrine, wrought many miracles, suffered an ignominious death, and was afterwards worshipped as God, having abundance of disciples and followers, at first chiefly amongst the vulgar, but a while after, amongst several of the most wise and learned men; who in a short space of time did propagate their belief and doctrine into the most remote parts of the world: I say, all this is for the truth of the matter of fact, not so much as doubted or called into question, by Julian, or Celsus, or the Jews themselves, or any other of the most avowed enemies of Christianity. But we have it by as good certainty as any rational man can wish or hope for, that is, by universal testimony, as well of enemies as friends.

John Wilkins.

# MORNING.-JANUARY 11.

GOD THE CHRISTIAN'S SURE SUPPORT. The Lord my Shepherd is, I shall be well supplied; Since he is mine, and I am his, What can I want beside?

He leads me to the place Where heavenly pasture grows, Where living waters gently pass, And full salvation flows.

If e'er I go astray, He doth my soul restrain, And guides me in his own right way, For his most holy name.

While he affords his aid, I cannot yield to fear; Though I should walk through death's dark shade, My Shepherd's with me there.

Watts.

#### THE VOICE OF WISDOM. PROVERBS, I.

1 The proverbs of Solomon, the Son of David, king of Israel;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; 3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment,

and equity. 4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

20 Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the

21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, 22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity; and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 Because I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord:

30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

## ELEVATION OF THE SOUL BY FAITH IN THE SAVIOUR.

O that our souls, fettered and weighed down by earthly cares, could rise above mundane concerns, and give themselves wholly up to the blessed influence of faith in Jesus Christ! What is the grandeur of the world, what its best enjoyments, compared with those we may claim through the merits of our Saviour? Truly they are "as dust in the balance," compared with those higher transports which await us among the riches of heaven, which cannot be corroded by rust, nor destroyed by moths, nor carried away by robbers. Greatly should we debase ourselves, if, with such a prospect before us, we could descend from hopes so exalted as those which cheer the Christian, to sigh for unsubstantial pomp, and revel in sensual joys. Poor, mean, and valueless, are the treasures of this world! Are they worth a thought from a rational being, when compared with the transports which await the sincere believer in another world?

How vain and perishable are the friendships of earth! Not to friends, however beloved, can we pretend to give our whole hearts, for they are inalienably fixed on our Redeemer. The honours of the world we can cheerfully dispense with, when we reflect, that through him we are made the children of God, the heirs of immortal glory. The joys of this sinful life shall tempt us in vain. We aspire to something far better than the noblest gifts of time,—we seek for the bliss of eternity. The whole globe is beneathour care, is too poor to satisfy spirits animated, like ours, by immortal hope.

Why, why are not these always our feelings? Why do we so often suffer ourselves to forget the glorious reward for a well-spent life, which we may secure? Too frequently, lured by the poor gew-gaws which folly has displayed, have we sought to grasp them, forgetting the grander objects which ought to occupy a reflecting mind. How have the sufferings of the patient victim who died on Calvary faded from our minds, and how prone have we felt to tread in the sinner's path! Where then has been our sense of the goodness of God, or of the love of his blessed Son? Absorbed by the cares of this life, we have been cold and insensible to all beside, though all around ought to have awakened devotion and gratitude. Even now, should the voice of pleasure sound in our ears, it might render us forgetful of duty. We confess our weakness; yet will we hope, by divine grace, that we shall have strength to control all our evil propensities, and that, by wise self-denial, we may approach piety and true wisdom. Would that our hearts might ever retain in undiminished force that sacred glow which fills them at this moment, that, fraught with hallowed love and gratitude, we may be prepared to forego every earthly good for the sake of our Saviour. O! that what he has endured for us may render his image so truly dear to each of his worshippers, that we may feel ourselves, under all imaginable circumstances, prepared to assume his cross, and steadfastly follow him.

Witness, Great God, our morning vow, that nothing, for the time to come, shall in our minds be put in comparison with Jesus Christ. Loving him, we must love all that is good and noble, we must love our fellow men as ourselves, and thee, O Father of the Universe, with all our heart and soul. We shall then have strength to strive with unfailing resolution for the prize of a blessed eternity; we shall rise superior to all the cares of this state of being, and finally, in full reliance on our God, depart from the world with perfect serenity and joy.

#### CHRISTIANS NOT TO DESPOND.

A christian should be very careful to keep up his spirits, when his condition in the world falls down. Could we but bring our minds to our conditions, to like and be pleased with our conditions, as being certainly persuaded that our present condition is best for us; it would be all as good, all as well, all as comfortable to us, as if we could bring our conditions to our minds; for one of these must be done, or else we shall never be free from heart trouble while we live; either our minds must be brought just even to, and suited and compliant to our conditions, be it sickness, poverty, shame, prison, &c. or, our conditions must be suited just even to our minds. We must have a mind to health, to liberty, &c.; we must have them, or we are troubled. Now, this latter is wholly and altogether out of our power; we cannot add a cubit to our stature. It is the Lord that appoints all our conditions for us; we cannot make our conditions happy, honourable, &c. of ourselves, and without God; but the former is in our power, by the help of God's spirit. Phil. iv. 11. St. Paul had learned it, and so may other christians. It is suitableness between our minds and our conditions, that breeds quiet and content; and if we have not quiet in our own minds, all outward comforts will do no more good, than a silken stocking to a scabbed leg, or a golden slipper to a gouty foot.

John Bunyan.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 11.

THE COMMUNION TABLE.

Here, where exulting Christians meet, To celebrate a Saviour's name; Lord, deign to make our joy complete, Our every thought and prayer the same.

And may this solemn festival,
What God has done for guilty man,
Affectingly to each recall,
And work out mercy's saving plan.

To sorrow, let it peace restore,
Improve and elevate the mind,
Wake holy thoughts, unknown before,
And charity for all mankind.

Away ye scoffers, who would blame Our transports as a bigot dream; When God, to honour, is our aim, Divine benevolence our theme THE BREAD OF LIFE .- JOHN, CHAP. VI.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that

a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying,

How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath

eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

### THE SACRAMENT.

We have been engaged this day in solemn, affecting, and spiritual exercises. Oh! that in us the Saviour may fulfil his promises. And why let us enquire, may he not even now be ready to communicate to our longing souls that grace which is his? We have partaken this day at the Sacramental table of the body and blood of Christ, as represented by the bread and wine used in the imposing ceremony, and claim, by virtue of them, all the benefits which the mighty atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer has secured for repentant sinners. We belong to Christ's flock. We shall not die. It will be our happiness to live with him in eternal joy. In God we recognise our Parent; and the fear of God, which passes all understanding, pervades our souls. This reflection sets our conscience at rest, and we derive new powers from it to pursue a nobler career of piety. We are of the children of God. We are connected with all that are really his in Heaven, or that still remain upon the earth, and our united prayers ascend to the father of all, for the benefit of each and all. Heaven is in our view; Jesus is ours; and feeling this, how vast, how rich is the possession in which we may exult. Our peace is made above, and we may look forward to a blissful never-ending life.

Death—come when it may, and in whatever shape. is no longer dreaded; it has ceased to present to our minds the horrors of annihilation. The grave suggests but a needful and refreshing sleep, to fit us for animated enjoyment in a happier state of being. Even over our wasting remains will the Redeemer keep watch, and endow us with a new existence, glorious like his own. His holy and spotless nature has transfigured humanity, has ennobled, cleaned, and sanctified our hearts, and we feel within us the pledge and the promise of everlasting life. What bliss-what rapture is there in the prospect! Oh! death, where is thy sting; Oh! grave, where is now thy victory! Where, Lord, is thy curse? Corruption and Hell, where are all thy threatening horrors? Death is changed into life—the curse into a blessing, and condemnation into perfect reconciliation and heart gladdening promises of eternal felicity. Praise the Lord—praise the Lord with gladness, and rejoice in our glorified Redeemer.

The happiness we know let us never forget, we owe to the merits and suffering of Jesus Christ. We are bound to reflect what high and important duties devolve upon us, as the recipients of benefits so vast. May it give us new resolutions, and more animated zeal, to tread in the steps of our Saviour! To what end has so much been done for us, but to enlarge our understandings and elevate our minds, that we might prove ourselves less unworthy than heretofore? O! let not the boon be disregarded—let it not prove unavailing; but, on the contrary, be it our delight and constant anxiety, to employ all our powers to honour our Maker, and to benefit our fellow creature. To honour him should be our chief care. That principle ought to stimulate all our energies and breathe in all our thoughts. Guided by that, we shall advance with a firmer step in the ways of piety and truth, conquer all opposing difficulties, and pass in safety through the stormy scenes of life, to that blessed Heaven, which every day will be found nearer and nearer to our home above the skies.

Let us muse on the solemn observances of this day. So doing, we shall find our spirits re-fled from this place of exile, to another and a better world. And do we not feel our hearts thrilled with gratitude to the giver of all good, who sent his son to this scene of trouble for our welfare, and who has permitted us to know, and in some degree to share, his blessed spirit. Wretched indeed should we be, not deeply to feel, and sin-

cerely to acknowledge, such instances of the bounty of our Lord. To him be the tribute of our heartfelt gratitude offered. Let us raise our voices, with one accord, to praise our Heavenly father, the source of all goodness. Deeply impressed as we now are with all his mercies, Oh! may these holy and reverential feelings always be ours. Be it our care to remember the past, and to look forward with joyous hope to what his grace will accomplish for us in the time to come. Let not the thoughts which now move us subside in dull forgetfulness, lost in the tumult of a wicked world. Ought we not to bear in mind the promise made by us to our Saviour, that we would no more outrage him by our depravity, but that our lives henceforward should be devoted to godliness and to him. The friend of the repentant sinner we know him to have been-but Christ is not the friend of sin. Oh, let us never lose sight of the example set by him; never desist from attempting to follow it. We should prove ourselves worthy of his care, and for his sake love our neighbour as ourselves, and prove this not rarely by words but by actions. To honour him, it must be our care to succour the unhappy. Our bread shall be shared with the hungry; the helpless wanderer must not be rudely chased from our door; we must clothe the naked, tend the sick, and compassionately visit the unfortunate inmate of a prison. To reclaim the wanderer, to comfort the afflicted, to strengthen the pious—these must be the objects of our lives. He is not a true follower of Jesus, he is no sincere Christian, who can, with cold insensibility, regard the wants of others, while indulging in sensual enjoyments himself. Let us avoid temptation, anxiously seek to associate with the good, and daily raise our thoughts in prayer to God, and to him who died to secure man's salvation. Placing in him all our confidence, we may advance serenely to life's goal, in the blessed assurance that ours will be the privilege to share his glory for ever in the world to come.

#### ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

Belief of salvation must be grounded on some inward transaction between Christ and the soul. I began to consider, whether any such thing had passed between Christ and me; and, while I was looking this way, the Lord Jesus drew me; and took hold of me, in raising me up to a sensible reliance on him.

I never had a more lively sense of my acceptance with God through Christ, than when I was sensible of the greatest recumbancy on him: when I laid most stress upon him, I always found most strength in him.

Before this faith came, I knew not how to secure myself against past, present, and future sins: but there was that

largeness of grace, that all-sufficiency of mercy, that infinity of righteousness, discovered to me in Christ, that I found sufficient for all the days of my life. I closed with Christ for acceptance throughout the whole course of my life. I dealt with him for all, at once.

Though new guilt puts me under a necessity of making fresh application to Christ, yet still it is upon the old footing. I cannot put Christ upon doing that for me, which he hath not already done. I daily apply to Christ for cleansing; which I call, living by faith: and I never was under the power of this faith, but I found a greater disposition in my spirit to practical holiness, than at any other time.

Cole

# MORNING.—JANUARY 12.

GOD'S GOODNESS; MAN'S WEAKNESS.

Father of light, from whom proceeds Whate'er thy every creature needs; Whose goodness providently nigh Feeds the young ravens when they cry; To thee I look! my heart prepare, Suggest and hearken to my prayer.

Since by the light myself I see Naked, and poor, and void of thee, Thine eyes must all my thoughts survey, Preventing what my lips would say: Thou seest my wants; for help they call, And ere I speak, thou knowest them all.

Thou knowest the baseness of my mind, Wayward, and impotent, and blind; Thou knowest how unsubdued my will, Averse to good, and prone to ill: Thou knowest how wide my passions rove, Nor checked by fear, nor charmed by love.

Ah, give me Lord, myself to feel;
My inbred misery reveal:
Ah, give me, Lord, (I still would say)
A heart to mourn, a heart to pray;
My business this, my only care,
My life, my every breath be prayer.

Bretheren's Collection.

# OBSERVANCE OF GOD'S COMMANDMENTS. DEUTERONOMY XXX.

8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

9 And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

10. If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

11 For this commandment which I command thee this day,

it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say,

Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and

death and evi.;

16 In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

#### THE WAYS OF GOD.

In this world all about us is in profound darkness. How little do we know the Great Being who has placed us here; how little do we know the world, and ourselves! Oh! how much is withheld from us respecting our own hearts. Certain, most certain as we are of thy being, yet how much doubt, conjecture; and imperfection, do we feel within ourselves, when we attempt to raise our thoughts to thee! Thou art too great for our finite comprehension; we own thee incomprehensible, and thy ways to us are utterly impenetrable. Mysterious are thy doings. Thou humblest to exalt; in order to bless, it is thy good pleasure to withdraw what we have deemed a blessing; and sorrow comes to us at thy bidding but as the herald of joy. Thou art still our protecting God, and we are consoled to know that we have a Redeemer.

Though often bewildered as we approach the close of an earthly pilgrimage, the obscurity which lays over our path sensibly abates. When it is thy good pleasure to call us hence, we live in the expectation that we shall be permitted to ascend to a higher, brighter light, and better comprehend thy purpose in ordering that we should exist in this world. Then, beyond doubt, we shall gratefully admire much that was heretofore the subject of deep regret; and thy wisdom conspicuous, we shall feel it was blind weakness in us to repine at any of thy dispensations. May we not hope that our perception of spiritual things, to which by grace we are admitted, through the merits of Jesus Christ, will in a still greater degree be rendered more clear? The afflictions which we have most severely felt, we shall thus acknowledge as blessings, and as having tended to our eternal salvation. Here we may have some in tears: them we shall reap in joy. If our days here were few, wearisome, and joyless, there we shall exult. that to a brief season of worldly sorrow succeeds a life of eternal happiness. If here we have had to deplore the loss of what we most valued; that in which we took most delight, there we shall understand that these were mercies in disguise, and that all was for our benefit. Thy object understood, our admiration will be unbounded, and we shall rejoice and bless thy name, for so graciously, so wonderfully, conducting us on our way.

We must wait patiently for a light to be thrown from above on those sublunary objects which perplex us now. Through gloomy paths, and byeways, most opposed to our wishes, it may be God's pleasure that we should advance towards life's goal. This may depress our minds, but let us be composed and resigned, and serenely pursue the path marked out for us to tread. Our sorrow may be speedily ended. Should it be long continued, we have still the satisfaction of knowing that from day to day we approach nearer and nearer to the end of our journey. Submissive to the will of a wise and gracious Creator, to him let our prayers ascend, and by faith in his goodness every difficulty will be conquered. Let no pusillanimous feeling or doubt find a place in our hearts. The Lord, our faithful and unerring guide, is omniscient. He knows our wants, and will grant what is really for our good. Revealed to him through our Redeemer, our God will neither abandon us, nor forget.

Consoled by this assurance, we may cheerfully pursue our way. This day, Merciful Father, be with us, and guide us into the right path. Let thy providence sustain our life, and thy good spirit regulate all our goings out and comings in, that we may not appear unworthy of thy continued bounty, and that we may eventually share in that blessedness which thou hast prepared for those who love and worship thee.

#### THE RICHES OF CHRIST.

Observe some beautiful and copious river. How it exhilarates the country, and fructifies the soil, through which it passes. Bestows a thousand conveniences, and gives birth to a thousand delights. So the Comforter, dwelling in the heart, gives such charming views of Christ and his unsearchable riches, as gladden the conscience, and make us truly happy. Hence, as from an inexhaustible source, true holiness flows, and every spiritual good. This will raise our desires far above earthly, sensual, transitory things; even as David's thoughts were raised far above the shepherd's scrip, when he sat exalted on the throne of Israel.

### HEAVENLY TREASURER.

There is this difference between rich and poor Christians: where a Christian is poor, his heavenly Father keeps the purse; but the rich keep the purse themselves. And it often falls out, that it is better to have the purse in our Father's hands than our own.

Dr. Dodd.

Seine 18 Auchiel houthwinds ( would a niet I mart cot of it Suther much & Wind about enough. call nough & Why, you jade you! as much as Palinays wind, whin you are not here do do such things. (Outer Catharine & Chyabeth) for suelles & Mon came you here? Tou de not look as if you were used to these sough, Like dishess I lived how the you expent that in can hilp you ? we are atmostles poor to relp ourselves - such mail Lesting girls is, you are, lov? beyou daughter's What can you do & Can your speni, or pen the sheep, or sero, or knist, or weare? to our sufly I Jaking the purse - looking at it ) What say you, Simon cruity murded & Well, you may so our durge less while you wish. I would do any living to ver the King. to disquise curs? findy, give her your large cape und apron Indy parts the articles - Gulliaring appears after and ward in pulling the in in They will be, I Kunh. (So de idah) Se, and get remilling for the other.

(To pedy) You may go loo, and after the lady! thess is haid. you may all legether dough the outdoor wer. (Cul Didah, Judy and & ligabeth) and will work Gan't you knis! m. Frondingen (Sels some knilling from her bag, and Thous Cathanine how to knie; talking as necessary, after a few monunts, to Simons Want you go and nelp the girls! Theywill need you about francing The sheep. How you escaped so Seit Simon clear from your prison. Artedy but our Dida and did 1. So uncelly you come the rest of the long Mayon foot? (C. l. Q. dale, fordat, and Cijabelle portout with you ought to know as well as I. In. may get your frock you Tore yesterday and mend it. (cut fridy) frank ming Hur Ordan is so very bashfut. , much · Wident, What time vas that which somewhat I made the girls laugh so, last might Lie Millions (Reading partitions) Cocaped this morning-de anged-duck hair - jewell - morn, June mum, - So com revounce ) Why did I not know his majesty's officers before V ( goes up & smack

Catharine on the Check Why do you sit Coilering here, and gaging, as though you had no manners, before the hong's officers ! Chefund that sight guick, and help your sister and your father fin the sheep! Jince your som have died, our daughters have to perform their service. persons described & You have seen all & have seen, except my husband and daugh Judy, who are about the out door heard of them I fow should we hear of them, who have rearcely a neighbor with whome to yeek western hills The king! and does he can so much about two crazy woomen ? until down & That I should be so honored as to have a king beneath my roof! Thomas should be ready according to our means (but offices and Soldies Man! poor things how can we probed her! Sumocent, and so lovely, she must good by snared! many daughters If h ! that I could save you! your knowledge i Shure, there is the inventains

mady weess that hold even there you cannot be safe; your too eager hope has forgot the fear you just mentioned If he thinks we have too many danghters, what, if he returns, and made realities Von must then disguised You may yet escape indighter So much for Joy

## EVENING .-- JANUARY 12.

THE BELIEVER'S COMFORT.

Let not the Christian's heart despair. For he is God's peculiar care,—
Does not the Saviour say.
Fowls of the air he feeds we see,
And clothes the lily. Are not ye
In his sight more than they?

Not all our toil can make man seem Other than God may fitting deem Our vision may be dim, But still our welfare is secured, For we of this may be assured, "Our wants are known to him."

Be this the feeling of each breast, He makes all things work for the best; Then let our souls be glad; For serving him from early youth, If we have faith, and love, and truth, "All else our Lord will add."

GOD'S POWER AND GOODNESS .- PSALM LXXXIX.

1 I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. 2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy

faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

6 For who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?

7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

8 O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

9 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

11 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast sounded them.

13 The hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

16 In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.

17 For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.

### ON THE EVENING OF OUR BIRTH DAY.

To the author of the universe let us raise our thoughts on this day, the day of our birth. We were nothing; he commanded us to start into existence, and opened to our view a blessed eternity. He is the source of all—the father of all created beings. In the plentitude of his goodness, he willed that celestial felicity should not be confined

to himself and the heavenly host; it was his fiat, that rational creatures should live, who might taste of happiness; and we, being of that number, let not our hearts forget to praise our God, and devoutly to thank him for all his gifts.

Infinite, immortal Being! mighty source of light and life, with joyful gratitude we offer up our adoration, on this, the anniversary of the day on which we first saw the light. We know thee; we know that thou livest. Of that we can have All that we see, as well as ourselves, no doubt. could not exist if thou wert not. Whatever we look upon serves but to reflect thy power. We know not how adequately to testify our gratitude, for that thou hast been pleased to raise us from the dust, give us a place among thy breathing, shrinking creatures, and to bless us, through the merits and the sufferings of thy Son, our Redeemer, with the assurance of everlasting life. We tender our acknowledgments, for that thou wast pleased to watch over us in our formation, and, subsequently, to endow us with health and strength. Many and great were the proofs of thy goodness, before our infant tongues could articulate thy praise. Accept then our homage for all the comforts we have known; for having thus far been our support, and kept us in the land of the living, while thousands have sunk into the grave. We thank thee for having given us an opportunity of learning the merits of our Saviour, during our stay on earth, and for gaining faith in him, and knowledge of thy great goodness to all the human race.

While we raise our voices, to exult in all the benefits we have received, we especially desire to thank thee for permitting us to be born among Christians, and for granting us the privilege of belonging to a Christian church. We have also cause to be thankful for the blessings of education. We have been preserved from the perils and fatal accidents which beset our youth. The arrows of death were flying thickly round us, but we, through thy interposing mercy, were spared. It has been our happy lot to find ourselves where virtuous precepts are respected, where holy truths were poured into our opening minds, to fit us for advancing years, and lay the foundations of future comfort and prosperity; and again we thank thee for the knowledge we have gained of a Saviour, and of thee, O Gracious Father! Eternal Governor of all !

May feelings of gratitude and mutual affection bind us together, and may there be nothing harboured in our hearts dishonouring to us, or offensive to thee. It would be happy for us, could our whole existence be devoted to thy service. If we take a retrospective glance at the years we have lived, do we not feel that each presents indisputable proofs of thy bounty? Happy for us had we always been appropriately faithful and grateful. But, alas! when we look into ourselves, shame and penitence come over us. How often have we done what we ought not to have done, and neglected to do what ought to have been performed. Merciful God! forgive and pity our weaknesses Prostrate before thee, with fitting and sins. humility, we now resolve to devote what remains to us of life to thy glory. Whether our days are to be further prolonged, or not, is to us unknown; but, under thy care, all things must work together for good. Assist us, O Lord! Conduct us into the paths of virtue and peace. Dependent on thee from our earliest infancy, even till we find ourselves near the verge of the grave, nay, beyond the grave, and through eternity, we fondly trust still to be blessed with thy unfailing support, as in the days that are fled. To thee, great God, we render up ourselves. Trusting that thy goodnees will bless us with cheerful content, as we proceed, that while here we may rejoice to live, and dying, experience no dismal regret that we have lived.

Without thee nothing, Almighty Father; but with thee, every thing! Aided by thee, what is there that we cannot accomplish! Now be it ours to contemplate the difference between this life and the world of spirits, to which we are hastening. Of the former we may take little heed; let us solemnly prepare ourselves for the latter. In this life thou hast bestowed, and we have received an earnest of thy protecting care. The storm may crush, the lightning may blast, but whatever the peril to which our mortal frames are exposed, our souls declare themselves of divine origin, and feel assured that, redeemed by thy Son, our Lord, it will be theirs to repose with thee for ever.

# DIVINE PROVIDENCE ALWAYS SUFFICIENT, BUT ALWAYS NECESSARY.

A Christian hath two things to relieve him against all his distrustful fears and cares; adoption, and particular providence. God is his father; and such a father, as is not ignorant of his condition, nor mindless of it. And, therefore, though a believer may have little or nothing in hand, it is enough that his father keepeth the purse for him; whose care extendeth to all things and persons: who hath the hearts of all men in his hand; and who worketh all things according to his own will.

Manton.

## MORNING .-- JANUARY 13.

THE CHRISTIAN'S AMBITION.

Let others boast their ancient line, In long succession great; In the proud list let heroes shine, And monarchs swell the state; Descended from the King of kings, Each saint a nobler title sings.

Pronounce me, gracious God! thy son,
Own me an heir divine;
I'll pity princes on the throne,
When I can call thee mine:
Sceptres and crowns unenvied rise,
And lose their lustre in mine eyes.

Content, obscure I pass my days,
To all I meet unknown,
And wait till thou thy child shalt raise
And seat me near thy throne:
No name, no honours here I crave,
Well pleased with those beyond the grave.

Cruttenden.

### SUFFERING WILL BE REQUITED.

II THESSALONIANS, I.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribu-

lations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer;

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense

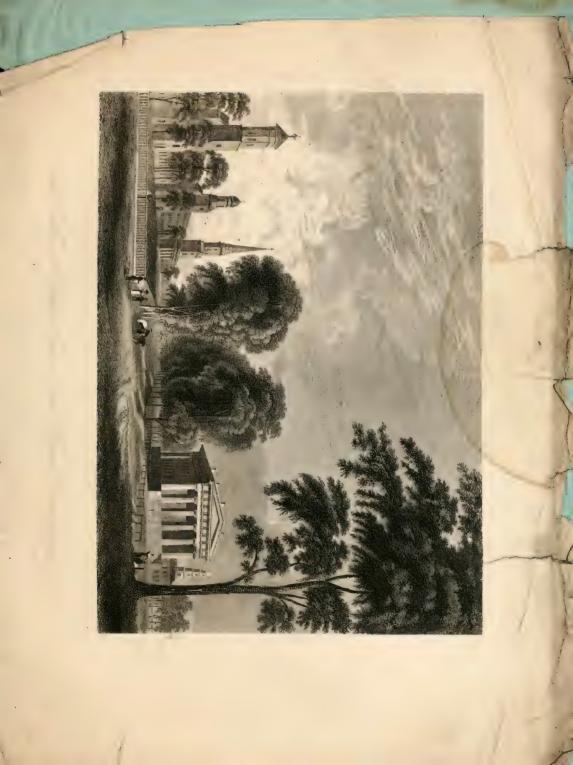
tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.

#### TAST MERCIES ACKNOWLEDGED.

While we contemplate the numerous blessings we have been permitted to enjoy from our cradle upwards, what language can appropriately embody our gratitude to God! The scraphs which surround his throne, behold the proofs of his bounty to man with silent awe, when they would celebrate his goodness and his glory. How then shall our feeble voices raise a strain of praise worthy the great, immortal, and mysterious theme of our rejoicing!

While yet we remained in dull unconsciousness, it was thy pleasure, O Lord to grant us the boon of existence, and when remained to discover in this world, by thee we were putted to those comforts which thy provide had prepared for us. We were numbered among the human race, and admitted to the privilege and dignity of being Christians. Angels surrounded our infant couch



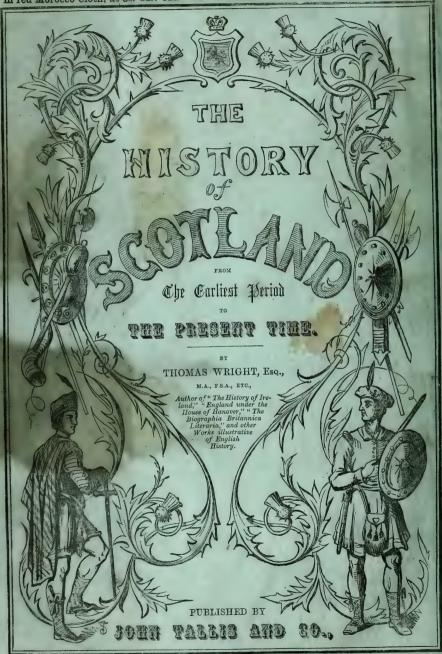




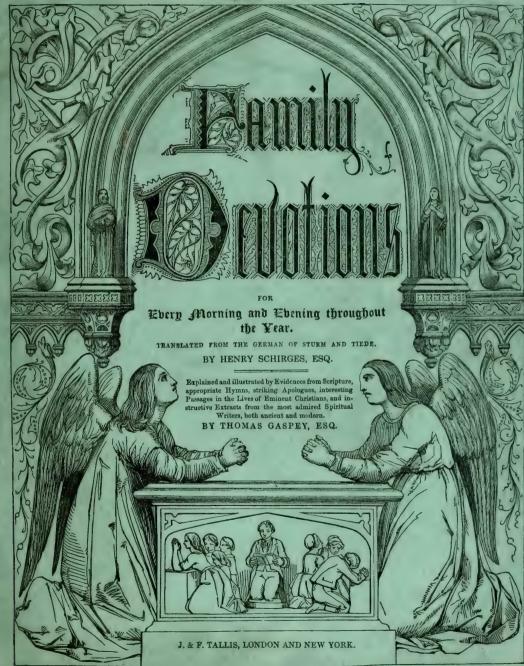
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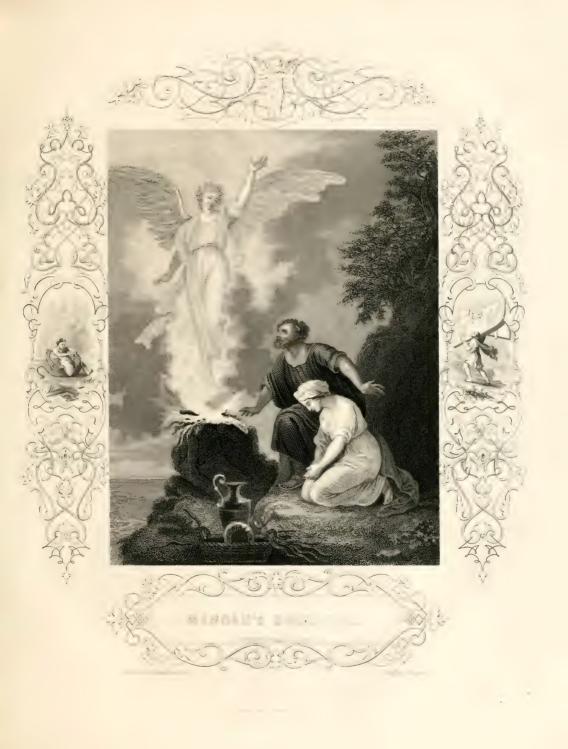
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and blessings unnumbered descended on our heads. Even while we rested on the bosoms of our mothers, our cares were regarded, and all our wants provided for. The wish imperfectly expressed, not yet fashioned into a prayer, thou didst not coldly disdain, and thy pitying eye looked on our falling tears. Our faltering steps were guided and strengthened by thee, and while wholly unequal to the task of defending ourselves, thy powerful

arm was our protection.

As we advanced to youth, thy goodness increased with our years. Thy mercy was great, great thy indulgence, which spared us when heedlessness betrayed us into fearful errors. Thy goodness recalled us from our wanderings; it restrained our impetuosity, and the dangers which we had brought upon ourselves. Thou gavest us capacity to avail ourselves of the advantages of education, and thy gracious favour we recognize in the parental love which watched over us from day to day. When it displayed the beauty of virtue, it was through thee that we profited from the kind admonitions, and realized the fond wishes of earthly parents, for our prosperity and success in life.

Often at the point of death, some of us have approached the brink of the grave. We have been snatched back by thy mighty interposing hand. While calamity has pressed sorely upon us, thou hast been a consoling friend. Through many nights, when death seemed in attendance to receive us from sleep, we have passed in safety, and opened our eyes to returning health in the

morning.

We cannot sufficiently praise thee for adding to our existence the present day, which has waked us to new gratifications and afforded additional proofs of thy fostering care. That we are capable of feeling this, is in itself no common blessing. O! may our hearts prove always grateful, and be ever thine, nor let one day pass in which we may not so improve our time, that our existence shall give evidence of thy glory; and if we are permitted to reach old age, our joyful tongues shall be employed in proclaiming thy truth. Through all our lives we pant to serve thee, and exult in thy bounty. In the day of affliction, and when surrounded with peril, to thee we shall ever turn with confiding hope, and even in death repose on the merits of thy Son, and quit this transitory state of being, to laud, with all those who through him gain salvation, thy greatness and thy benevolence. Not eternity itself will be too long to honour thy

unbounded munificence. While we remain in this life we desire to retain it constantly in our thoughts, and unceasingly to meditate on the wondrous works of thy hand, and on thy ever lasting glory.

#### THE REWARD OF HOLINESS CERTAIN.

The final reward is sure—it will come at last, and not fail us: and it is so great withal, that when it cometh it will abundantly recompense all our work, yea, and our patience too.

Nay, let me say, if that reward were not, nor any other world to come, yet the fruit we reap in the mean time, even in this world, from a godly life, is incomparably greater than any that the works of the flesh can yield us. Even in the judgment of heathen men, virtue ever carrieth its reward with it, as being bonum propter se expetendum, a thing to be desired and embraced for its own worth, without respect to any further reward. And certainly the evenness of the mind, and vacuity from those secret lashes, those horrors and fears that haunt a guilty conscience; and the sweet comfort and complacency that a righteous soul findeth in the sincere performance of his bounden duty to God and man, in eschewing evil and doing good, is a fruit infinitely more valuable than all the pleasures and sensualities of a wicked life. How happy then is he, that truly serveth God; who both hath "his fruit in holiness" onward, (that is "the hundred-fold" in this life,) and shall in the end have "everlasting life" to boot.

Sanderson

# EVENING.—JANUARY 13.

GOD'S POWER AND GLORY.

Praise to the Lord of boundless might! With uncreated glories bright; His presence gilds the world above,—
The unchanging source of light and love.

'Let there be light!' Jehovah said, And light o'er all earth's face was spread; Nature, arrayed in charms unknown, Gay with its new-born lustre shone.

He sees the mind, when lost it lies In shades of ignorance and vice; And darts from heaven a vivid ray, And changes midnight into day.

My soul, revived by heaven-born day, Thy radiant image shall display; While all my faculties unite To praise the Lord, who gives me light.

Doddridge.

THE WISDOM OF GOD. PROVERBS, CHAP. III.

19 The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

21 ¶ My son, let not them depart from thine eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.

23 Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

24 When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh.

26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

28 Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

29 Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

30 ¶ Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 ¶ Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

32 For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.

33 ¶ The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 ¶ Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

#### COMPASSION OF THE SUPREME BEING.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him."

What consolation do we find in these words! They offer a balsam from heaven to assuage the pangs of sorrow. Where can we seek for rest—where for peace with God, and peace within our own hearts, did not the holy scripture make us acquainted with the never failing bounty of our Creator? Without that, what joy could we participate in while journeying through this life? How could we dare to taste of pleasure, did we not know that, like erring children, we shall find favour in the eyes of a kind, forgiving, father? Unworthy as we feel of what he has already bestowed, dare we, sinners as we know ourselves to be, look forward with hope to eternity?

"God is all compassion." The Bible announces the fact, which all creation joins to impress upon the devoutly meditative mind from day to day. Shall Christians then feel their courage fail, and doubt the goodness of their All-wise Father? True, our sins are great; but infinitely greater is the grace of God. In him, then, we may serenely trust, "for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." And since to his allpenetrating eye our infirmities are manifest, he will not forget how weak is that fragile body in which he has enclosed an immortal soul; and all our sins, when duly repented, will be freely forgiven. He will not reject with severity those who implore his compassion. "God is all compassion." Oh! let us joyfully repeat words so rich in consolation—a consolation which can never fail—with

rapture and gratitude; but, doing so, let us not abuse their meaning, and construe them into encouragement for heedlessness or intemperance. God's compassion ought to make us ambitious of rendering ourselves worthy of it. But can that be? Can we be ever worthy of that forbearing love to which we stand indebted for all present comfort and future hope? What can we do to render us worthy of such divine care. More than we deserve God will always be ready to grant, but our efforts to make ourselves less displeasing to him, will be regarded with favour. These alone bring us nearer to his throne and render us more worthy of the denomination we claim. Appreciate the richness of his bounty, and let us never forget that it ought to wake in us a sense of our own meanness, devout zeal, and true penitence.

"God is all compassion." As we expect that he will compassionate us, let it be our care to feel compassion for our neighbours. Followers of the Saviour, sincere believers, listen to his voice, and constantly treasure in your hearts a recollection of what he has enjoined, "Be you therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful; judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive,

and ye shall be forgiven."

Even so. O thou who hast compassion for us surveying thy creatures, from the throne of heaven, grant forgiveness to our sins. Such is the prayer of millions now before thee, trembling with a sense of their own misdeeds. Grant, grant us pardon. Our transgressions are great, but still greater is thy mercy. Pardon! pardon! is the cry which rises from thousands of altars consecrated to thee, and anxiously imploring looks are directed to him who, in his parting moments, addressed to thee, for sinful mortals, the merciful prayer, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." From the bed of the dying the cry of forgiveness rises in deeply-drawn sighs, while the quivering lip faintly strives to embody in speech the anxious wish of the sinking heart.

It is thine, O God of mercy, to soothe the broken spirit, and give the sufferer sweetest relief. Thou rememberest not our sins, knowing our frailty, and thou regardest with thy approving smile the endeavours we make to lead a more holy life. We know that thou hast compassion upon us, nor shall despondency crush our hopes. We may suffer for our faith in thee, but our faith we will never abandon. Be it ours to tell those who languish in sorrow of thy compassion and to

soothe the broken spirit, by referring to thy divine word.

Christ, who died and who lives for us, for whose merits God looks with compassion on mankind, has taught us courage to put our trust in our Eternal Father. It was his, in the midst of the awful sufferings on Mount Calvary, to exhibit to man reliance on the goodness of God. Burdened with the sins of a guilty world, our Saviour still endured with holy fortitude. His triumph is a sacred inheritance bequeathed to us.

O Lord! when life's closing hour shall have arrived, when our strength fails, our perceptions are feeble, and our courage abated, O, then, let us derive support from thy promises. Sorrowing over the cold remains of those most dear to us, grant that our tearful eyes may look up to thee with pious confidence, with the sincere conviction that what God has done, must be done for some good purpose. This feeling we desire to cherish to the last; and when, from rapidly fading life, our hands may no longer be lifted in prayer, while the dampness of death comes over us, and the sunken eye may no longer distinguish friends and relatives, even then our thoughts will dwell on thy bounty, and with humble but heart-cheering hope, we shall feel that though the mortal form of man must perish, by thy grace the purified spirit will survive through all eternity.

### MAN'S PRAISE IMPERFECT.

Happy spirits may well frame notions, and employ expressions in honour of their Maker, so far transcending ours, that though the angels' goodness keeps them, doubtless, from beholding them with contempt; yet, we may well think, they look upon them with such a kind of pity, as that wherewith great wits and courtiers look upon the mistakes and imperfections of what they did and writ, when they were but school-boys; and as that wherewith, when we shall be admitted to the society of the angels, we shall look back upon our former selves. To praise God is a debt, which, though we should ever be paying, we must always owe, not only because the renewed obligations will last as long as we; but because, though the entire sum were possible to be paid, we have no coin of the value that would be requisite to make a payment of that nature.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 14.

GOD OUR REFUGE.

God is the refuge of his saints, When storms of sharp distress invade; Ere we can offer our complaints, Behold him present with his aid.

Let mountains from their seats be hurled Down to the deep, and buried there: Convulsions shake the solid world, Our faith shall never yield to fear. Loud may the troubled ocean roar, In sacred peace our souls abide, While every nation, every shore, Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.

There is a stream, whose gentle flow Supplies the city of our God; Life, love, and joy still gliding through, And watering our divine abode.

That sacred stream, thine holy word, That all our raging fear controls: Sweet peace thy promises afford, And give new faith to fainting souls.

Watts.

THE CHRISTIAN MUST DO GOOD TO OTHERS. JAMES II.

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, vet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by

the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him.

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily

food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works:
shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee
my faith by my works.

### DEVOUT EXERCISES A PLEASURE.

How blessed, how refreshing is reverential communion with thee, our Father and our God! How are we lifted above the world and all its vanities, how fortified against temptation, when our minds are earnestly engaged in prayer to thee. We then glow with exultation, contemplating the dignity which thou hast bestowed on us, the faculties which we possess, and the immortal spirit which we feel within us, while offering, in our devotions, those thoughts which spring from the heart. Our souls then exult that they know thee, and are permitted to adore; and we learn properly to value the privilege of calling thee "Our Father." Then are we comforted by the cheering assurance that we are under thy almighty protection and care. We now desire to return our hearty thanks for that thou hast granted us another day, and that we can still gaze on the

sun, view the glories of the sky, and extol the wonders performed by thy creating hand. Touched with thy manifest bounty, we are lost in admiration of its magnitude. Yes, let our souls praise the Lord, for all that he has done, and even though heavy afflictions come over us before night returns, forget not his mercy—forget not that he to whom we offer our adoration, is allpotent, and willing to grant whatever we desire, that is suited to our condition.

What shall we implore him to bestow? Oh God, thou knowest all our wishes and necessities. Thou seest the secret desires of each breast; thou seest our cares and our sorrows, and how keenly we feel that, from our blindness, we know not for what we ought to petition; yet this, if we know our own thoughts, we earnestly desire, to abate the imperfections of which we are conscious, and to find favour in thy sight. What happiness can there be for us, if thy favour be withdrawn? Deprive us of all the prosperity we enjoy, of every comfort we prize; take from us even existence itself, but let us not lose, while we survive, the happiness we now boast, of sharing the grace and being regarded with favour by the Mighty Arbiter of all. Let us rejoice in a pure conscience, and in unshaken faith in thee. This in adversity will afford consolation, in embarrassment resolution, and under all circumstances comfort and support. Now standing in thy presence, all-bounteous God! our thoughts turn to our fellow-men, of whom millions may at this present moment address their prayers to thee. To them, with us, be graciously pleased to manifest thy favour as for them, in common with us, our Redeemer suffered. How many of the afflicted, the persecuted, the sick, and the dying, will this morning claim thy mercy! May they find favour in thy eyes !—may they experience thy healing care, thy benign compassion! In the huts of the poor, as well as amidst the magnificence of the palace, let thy goodness be confessed. Withhold it not even from those who forget to honour thy greatness, or who are too proud to bend the knee before thy throne. Pity all the human race whom our Lord came to redeem, and let this day further the salvation of every supplicant that calls thee Father. Let the sinner be turned from his evil ways, the desponding be comforted, the sick relieved, and the dying sustained, by heavenly hope, in the final struggle. Grant these blessings, and henceforth the whole world must worship thee, and glorify thy goodness, henceforth and

even through eternity. Lord God of Sabaoth! all the lands are full of thy honour; my heart also must become full of thy holy name. Amen! Hallelujah!

# VIRTUE'S EXERCISES NECESSARY TO A CHRISTIAN'S COMFORT.

The pleasures of virtue to a good and perfect man, are not like a perfume, which is very delightful when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble; we are well enough without it: but virtue is like hunger and thirst, it must be satisfied or we die. And when we feel great longings after religion, and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the word and sacraments is more intolerable, and we think ourselves really most miserable when the church-doors are shut against us, or like the Christians, in the persecution of the Vandals, who thought it worse than death that their bishops were taken from them: if we understand excommunication or church censures, (abating the disreputation and secular appendages,) in the sense of the Spirit, to be a misery next to hell itself; then we have made a good progress in the charity and grace of God: till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or imperfect, in the same degree in which our affections are cold, and our desires remiss. For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats, and an hour of fervour is more pleasing to God than a month of lukewarmness and indifference.

Jeremy Taylor.

## EVENING.—JANUARY 14.

RISING TO GOD.

Now let our souls, on wings sublime, Rise from the vanities of time, Draw back the parting veil, and see The glories of eternity.

Born by a new celestial birth, Why should we grovel here on earth? Why grasp at transitory toys, So near to heaven's eternal joys?

Shall aught beguile us on the road, When we are walking back to Gon? For strangers into life we come, And dying is but going home.

Rippon's Collection.

### LIFE'S VANITIES EVANESCENT. ISAIAH, CHAP. V.

- 11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night till wine inflame them!
- 12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

#### CHAP. III.

- 16 Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:
- 17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon.

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments about the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels.

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

### LEISURE TIME NOT TO BE WASTED.

It is fit that we should often consider in what way our leisure hours may be best employed. We ought to consider that time which we have for relaxation, and for renewing our capabilities, is of no small importance. Those who duly appreciate the value of the gift, will feel anxious that not a single moment should be wasted. Such seasons of rest form considerable portions of our existence, and for them we shall one day have to account.

We frequently adopt mistaken views of life frequently deem valueless those moments which. wisely improved, are a treasure. Time is often complained of as hanging heavily on our hands; we wish to accelerate its flight; but, sooner or later, we wonder at the swiftness with which it has passed away, like a dream of the morning. In vain, then, may we sigh for the weeks we have unwisely neglected, for the years which we have foolishly allowed to depart unheeded, never to be recalled. Then shall we vainly wish that life to us might be renewed that we might spend it more wisely. Too late it occurs to us, that every minute wilfully sacrificed involved, the infraction of a solemn duty, and bitter will be the reflection that to have lived to no good purpose, may be as bad as not living at all.

Our hours glide away with inconceivable rapidity. Where are the years which we have already numbered? What do we now retain of them but a weak, shadowy image of some of their incidents? Where are the flowers which we plucked in our youth? They have crumbled into dust. Where are the friends with whom we found ourselves most intimately connected? The stream of time has carried them from our view; many of them are in foreign lands, or mouldering in the grave.

And where is the blithe song that once gladdened our ears? It is still. The voice is mute, its music has ceased, and we hear it no more. The playmates of our youth are now grey with age; to us they are no longer the same, and we can scarcely be recognized by them. But what has become of the grand projects which at various periods occupied our minds—mighty objects in the then contemplated future? Some have been successfully followed up, worked out, and forgotten; others wholly lost sight of, and abandoned. Of that which was accomplished, what remains, after all our labours and anxious cares, but decrepitude and age? Much of what was most dear to us has been borne away by the vicissitudes of life, and we stand almost alone on the awful verge of eternity. Soon must the final hour arrive, and the emancipated spirit stand at the bar of God.

Our hours vanish with startling rapidity; our minutes fly swifter than our thoughts. The moments of which we are now sensible are no longer ours, and the coming instant will be fled before we can say of it that "it is here."

It is the part of wisdom to regard time as the gift of the Deity, which ought not to be squandered away as if it were of no account. We know that in the end our souls alone will remain to us, and the prudent, therefore, endeavour to ennoble them, and to labour them to perfection. The soul alone can be snatched from the wave of time, and preserved after this life shall have closed, in a better world. A true Christian will not waste his leisure hours. For the sublime objects which he has it in contemplation to obtain, man has too little time, and consequently none should be thrown away as useless.

The Christian, in his hours of rest, should set an example of contentment and peace. He enjoys them as does the labourer cessation from toil. Like our common father, he ought to aspire to promote the happiness of all mankind, or occupy his mind with devout contemplations of the works of the Almighty.

of the Almighty.

And exquisite is the delight which grows on the reflection, that we have promoted the happiness of our families and of our fellow creatures, and on the consciousness of having performed the duties which devolve upon us, with faithful care. Such an exertion of our power it is happiness to recal.

But in our leisure hours it behoves us to make it apparent that we are Christians. Our amusements, when most at ease, should be rationally chosen. By these our character is known. Every mirthful exercise must be shunned which is other than innocent. We must scorn to seek any enjoyment which is founded on the affliction of others. It is only the sinfully heartless, who can delight in that which springs from the misery of a fellow creature. Such is not the course of a Christian, nor is it worthy of him to exult over the failings or the misfortunes of his neighbours. Detraction and calumny must be regarded as criminal. The exalted spirit of a true follower of the Saviour, can enjoy nothing so ignoble, so poor.

Eternal Source of all Good! Gracious Father! thou wilt not allow any of thy creatures to languish in misery, without hope. For each hast thou prepared enjoyment suited to his nature; whether it be the shining seraph near thy throne in the skies, or the grovelling earth-worm which

stretches itself in the sunny ray.

All-glorious Creator! grant us peace of heart. and let us ever with cheerful humility seek to do thy will. If here our felicity is not great, we know that the trials to which we are subjected are sent but to prepare us for a better world,—for a state of never-ending bliss. Thou art our Parent and our Judge, and in connexion with all seasons. all ages, and all destinies, thy bounty is conspicuous. Supported by confidence in thee, we will fearlessly walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Thy Eternal Son took upon himself mortality; he passed through the fearful struggle, casting only an imploring look up to thee. With unsubdued courage, and unfailing resolution, he advanced to suffer a terrible death. His example we humbly desire to follow; for who can injure us if thou art with us, O God!

# MORNING.—JANUARY 15.

MAY WE NOT LISTEN IN VAIN.

Let me not always, Lord, appear Among thy saints in vain; How many sermons do I hear? How few do I retain?

Let me not to thy temple come,
And empty thence depart;
But may I gladly carry home
Thy treasure in my heart.

A blessing, Lord, on me bestow, Worthy thyself to give: Let me retain it whilst below, And on thy riches live.

Fellows.

UNDERSTANDING WILL BE GIVEN FROM ABOVE. JEREMIAH III.

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and ray, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I

will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.

13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lorn thy Gon, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lorn.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two

of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

22 Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our GOD.

23 Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.

#### CHAP. VI.

16. Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

#### RESOLUTIONS TO AVOID FUTURE TEMPTATIONS.

Among the countless blessings for which we have to be thankful to the great author of our being, the privilege of gazing on the glorious works of nature is not the least; but more important than all, is that which we acknowledge in our graciously awarded salvation and redemption by Jesus Christ. Sad would be our fate, had not our minds been devoutly illuminated by those holy truths which point to a blessed eternity. We are now happily aware that God requires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and that his children should look up to him with veneration, love, and gratitude; solicitous to yield ready obedience to his will. We know that we can only hope for his favour and blessing through sincere piety and a steadfast reverence for the truth. Our souls we know to be immortal, and Heaven, not this world, the country to which they belong. What benefit can be greater than this important revelation—what happiness more perfect than that of finding ourselves among those redeemed by Jesus Christ? Do we deserve so vast a blessing? Have we proved, in all circumstances, that we were anxious to be found among the followers of the Saviour? Have we sought to make it clear that his feelings were ours? Have his disinterested love, his inflexible resolution, his pious confidence, and his holy humility, been known to our souls? Alas! with shame we must confess it, this is not so. Too often has our conduct been anything but that which ought to mark the disciples of our Lord. We have sinned against our Creator by impatient repinings

at his dispensations, by intemperate resentment of the doings of our fellow-creatures, by selfish coldness of heart, by indolence and neglect of sacred things, and by seeking sensual pleasures. Often misled, we have possessed the will, the will only, of doing good, and the actual good we might have accomplished has been left undone.

This morning we desire with all sincerity, to implore thy grace, O God! to purify our hearts and enlarge our understandings; that, animated by new hope, and a clearer perception of thy glory, we may for the time to come watch over our minds more diligently, and remember in all circumstances, the path marked out for us to tread by our blessed Redeemer. In us uncharitable sentiments shall not again tarnish the honour of the Christian name. No longer the slaves of passion grovelling with the worm, shall low desires draw our souls aside from virtue. We will cease to be the servants of men, entitled as we are to rank among the children of Christ, being ransomed by his blood. Remorse shall no more disturb our hearts; our accusing consciences shall henceforth have no place in our bosoms. We now know how intolerable is the thraldom of sin, and how ignominious it is to surrender to vanity, ambition, or the other weaknesses and vices of human Such bondage can give no peace of mind, but it is a source of continual pain. Make it appear, O Lord! that we are thine, truly thine, thy children, thy subjects, thy property. Grant us grace to merit such honour and happiness, and may we never forfeit thy favour by relapsing into negligence or sin. Let our souls faithfully remember the vow now pronounced to live and die thy true worshippers.

ANCIENT MODE OF COMMANDING ATTENTION TO A SERMON.

The fathers differed much in pulpit action, the greater part used very moderate and sober gesture. Paul of Samoseta used to stamp with his foot, and strike his thigh with his hand, and throw himself into violent agitations: but he was blamed for it by his contemporaries. They thought his action theatrical, and improper in a church; and yet in every church the people were allowed and even exhorted to applaud the preacher by shouting and clapping their hands at the close of a period, as at the theatre, or in the forum. The first preachers delivered their sermons all extempore, and they studied, while they preached, the countenances of their auditors, to see whether the doctrine were understood. The people endeavoured to express their sentiments, most likely at first by a look, a nod, a shake of the head, or a lifting of the hand. At length this rose up to loud acclamations and clappings; and the preachers perceiving the abuse preached it down.

Paul of Samoseta used to scold at the people, when they did not shout and applaud him. It happened often their applause was no praise. They applauded what they did not

understand. Austin one day proposed a question to himself to answer in preaching. The answer might have deserved applause had he given it: but the congregation fell a shouting at the question, before they knew whether he could answer it properly. "Hey-day," said he, "what are you praising? Do ye know what I was saying? I only proposed a question, and you go to clapping and shouting!"

Sermons in those days were all in the vulgar tongue. The Greeks preached in Greek, the Latins in Latin, for the preachers meant to be understood. They did not preach by the clock (so to speak), but were short or long as they saw occasion. Augustine used to leave off when the people's hearts seemed properly affected with the subject. He judged of this sometimes by their shouting, and at other times by their tears. Their sermons were usually about an hour long: but many of them may be deliberately pronounced in half an hour, and several in less time.

Claude.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 15.

GOD OUR ONLY HOPE.

Let kings rely upon their host,
And of his strength the champion boast:
In vain they boast, in vain rely;
In vain we trust the brutal force;
Or speed, or courage of an horse,
To guard his rider, or to fly.

The eye of thy compassion, Lord,
Doth more secure defence afford,
When deaths or dangers threat'ning stand:
Thy watchful eye preserves the just,
Who make thy name their fear and trust,
When wars or famine waste the land.

In sickness, or the bloody field,
Thou our physician, thou our shield,
Send us salvation from thy throne;
We wait to see thy goodness shine;
Let us rejoice in help divine,
For all our hope is God alone.

Watts

GOD REVEALS HIDDEN THINGS IN MERCY. DANIEL II.

20 Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

21 And he changeth the time and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

and knowledge to them that know understanding:

22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee.

CHAP, IX

9 To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.

### GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT.

In this imperfect state of things we are evidently in a state of probation to determine our fitness for another world. We are, as it were, at

school receiving education for eternity. powers are limited, and we are encompassed by dangerous temptations. Sinful wishes spring up in the heart, and debasing propensities strive against reason and religion. In the conduct of others, we see many whose depravity exhibits examples which shock a virtuous mind, yet within our own bosoms we too frequently discover that we have there a formidable enemy, who would lure us to the sinner's path. To watch and pray then becomes our duty, that, guided by a better principle, our souls may defy all the arts of the tempter, nor lose sight of the joys of an eternal world to gratify our senses by the debasing pleasures of this. Happiness itself may prove a snare to the soul not awake to its danger, and an affront may betray us into a burst of unchristian-like indignation. Love of gain may call forth avarice, and pride may grow on honourable distinctions gained, or on flattery administered. Excitement may introduce us to degrading dissipation; poverty may overwhelm with unbecoming dismay, and riches tempt us to revel in wasteful luxury. Foes of our future happiness, invisible and unknown to us, may be near, and their hatred is perhaps occupied in forming schemes for our undoing, of which we can have no knowledge.

To whom, under such circumstances, can we fly for succour, but to the Mighty One. Left to ourselves, it is but too probable that every danger, that every temptation would lead us astray and endanger our eternal welfare. Where then shall we seek the indulgent being who will soothe our sorrows, re-assure us when we despond, and encourage us by comforting assurances when we are depressed by calamity. To thee, O God! who art in heaven, we address our supplications for needful aid in the day of distress, and for strength and understanding to resist temptation. On thy omnipotence and grace, we rest all our hopes when tribulation comes over us. No accident can befal, no danger overtake us without thy permission. After the proofs we have had of thy watchfulness and love, in the days that are fled, feeling as we do, that but for thy protection and support we must long since have sunk beneath the evils that assailed us: what remains for us but to tender our sincere thanks to our bountiful Creator for all we owe him for the past, and humbly supplicate him to extend to us his protection for the future. When we faint be graciously pleased to renew our strength, that we may not be utterly lost. Let thy good providence assign

to us a situation in which we may encounter the least possible temptation, and meet with the fewest obstacles to a pious life. Grant that the circumstances which surround us, may dispose our hearts to accomplish good deeds. Not to be wholly spared suffering and temptation do we presume to claim. That were to ask that we shall be exceptions to humanity; but anxiously we pray, as taught by the Redeemer, that we may not be "led into temptation," too great for our weakness to resist; that our woes may not be so overwhelming as wholly to master our fortitude. Further, O Lord! we implore of thy goodness that in any case, in joy or sorrow, in riches or poverty, in health or sickness, we may never forsake our hope in thee, and that striving against sin, the victory may be ours.

In all things connected with this life, we desire to commend ourselves to the all-wise Creator, and prepare to bend with cheerful submission to whatever he wills shall be our future lot. Bless us, O God! in life or in death—do with us what to thee seemeth good. Enable us to detect the nothingness of all worldly joys, that we may be occupied as becomes immortal spirits, in preparing for the eternity before us. To this let all our hopes and labours aspire. Impart a portion of thy unearthly love, that we may anxiously seek to promote the welfare of others. Let us be patient in the hour of affliction, meek in that of prosperity, and serene in the presence of danger. Our heavenly Father we ought to confide in, and feel assured that he will not lay on us a burden which we are too feeble to bear, and faithfully striving to fulfil our duty to him and our fellowcreatures, he will guide us through the troubled ocean of life, to the haven of everlasting peace.

#### PECULIAR ADVANTAGE OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is a peculiar advantage of christianity (which no other law or doctrine so much as pretendeth to), that it not only clearly teacheth us and strongly persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient help and ability to practise it; without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth), that all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement, would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect "ministries of condemnation," racks of conscience, parents of guilt and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them; imposing heavy burdens, but not enabling to bear them: our law is not such; it is not a dead letter, but hath a quickening spirit accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth itself on the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safeguard from all evil; if our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful oracle, where we may receive counsel and information; if our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if

temptations be violent, and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish ourselves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them; if our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it offereth, on our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort, in all exigencies. To them who, with due fervency and constancy ask it, God hath in the gospel promised to "grant his holy spirit," to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprises and assaults of temptation, to sustain them and cheer them in afflictions.

Barrow.

# MORNING-JANUARY 16.

MERCY FROM THE JUDGMENT SEAT.

With my whole heart I'll raise my song, Thy wonders I'll proclaim; Thou, sovereign judge of right and wrong, Will put thy foes to shame.

I'll sing thy majesty and grace; My God prepares his throne To judge the world in righteousness And make his vengeance known.

Then shall the Lord a refuge prove For all the poor opprest; To save the people of his love, And give the weary rest.

The men that know thy name, will trust, In thy abundant grace; For thou hast ne'er forsook the just, Who humbly seek thy face.

Watte

GOD CAN SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM EVERY DANGER. DANIEL VI. 11 These men assembled, and found Daniel praying and

making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah. regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before

him: and his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt

was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

#### LET THE CHRISTIAN TRUST IN GOD.

Man from day to day indulges new ideas and forms new plans, which he fondly hopes will advance his prosperity and gratify his desires. Our first thoughts this morning were probably turned to the means by which we hoped to profit, in worldly matters, from our present position. Yet how vain are all our schemes! How often have they subjected us to bitter mortification and ignominious defeat, and all our cares have proved of no avail. Shall we then longer pursue such vain imaginings? No, let us rather cease to hope from what we ourselves can do, and place all hopes of success on God. Be this our resolution. Let it be sincerely adopted and adhered to with stern determination. Perseverance in it will prove an unfailing source of peace of mind. We shall then be spared that vexation which disappointment inflicts, nor feel anxiety for what may hereafter occur, but rest in security confiding in the providence of our great Creator.

Unconsciously slumbering on the maternal bosom, who then cared for our future welfare? Who ordered what should await our future days, while we were incapable of understanding what passed around us in the moment then present. It was that great and Eternal Being who, as he is the source of all life, is the fountain of all goodness. He ordered all things connected with the course of our existence. Shall we dare now, with the proofs we have of his goodness, to distrust his care? Our weakness would prompt us to follow our own counsel, weak and insufficient as it has proved. We may persuade ourselves that it is

for us to govern and arrange the days that are to come, though even this moment we can scarcely call our own. Yes, we could still arrogantly take upon ourselves to order the future, little as we are informed and benefited by the past. just and solemn reflection, far be from us the thought. No, omnipotent Creator, to thee we desire to leave the regulation of all the future. Our lives, our everything on earth, we rejoice to know are in thy hands. If the vain doubting heart would lead us to distrust thee, we will conquer its fears by thy grace, and walk in the path which thou hast marked out for us. Dreary as it may be, we will not deviate from the track. To God we desire to be all resignation. Our cares thrown upon thee, our sole desire is to render ourselves acceptable in thy sight. All thy dispensations will then contribute to our comfort, and tend to secure us eternal bliss. Neither the present nor the future, we confidently trust, can withdraw thy love from thy supplicating children.

Cherishing hopes so exalted, with what blessed tranquillity can we now commence the new day which has opened upon us. Strengthen and increase them in all our souls. Our confidence in thee will be its own reward. Grant us thy grace to overcome all our weak misgivings. Let this be our happy lot, our unfailing support. Be our shepherd, our watchful guardian, our prop, that we may not sink. Keep our hands from sin. Bending before thee with the deepest humility, to thee we commend ourselves in all things. O Lord, our voices are heard by thee, and it is thy good pleasure to reward those who fear thy holy name. We shall always remain by thee, sustained by thy right hand. In thy judgment thou wilt direct us in our journey through this world, and at last receive us to share thy glory.

GOD ASSISTS THE WEAK AND CHEERS THE HUMBLE.

Said James to his mother, lo! yonder stands a pillar, and it looks as if something was written thereon: let us go and see what it is. So they went, and found there written, "Let Christian's slips, before he came hither, and the battles that he met with in this place, be a warning to those that come after." Lo! said their guide, did not I tell you that there was something hereabouts that would give intimation of the reason why Christian was so hard beset in this place? Then turning himself to Christiana, he said, no disparagement to Christian more than to many others whose hap and lot it was; for it is easier going up than down this hill, and that can be said but of few hills in all these parts of the world. But we will leave the good man; he is at rest; he also had a brave victory over his enemy; let Him grant, that dwelleth above, that we fare no worse, when we come to be tried, than he!

But we will come again to this valley of humiliation. It is the best and most fruitful piece of ground in all these parts. It is fat ground, and as you see, consisteth much in meadows; and if a man was to come here in the summer-time, as we do now, if he knew not anything thereof, and if he also delighted himself in the sight of his eyes, he might see that which would be delightful to him. Behold how green this valley is! also how beautified with lilies! I have known many labouring men that have got good estates in this valley of humiliation. "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble;" for indeed it is a very fruitful soil, and doth bring forth by handfuls. Some also have wished that the next way to their Father's house were here, that they might be troubled no more with either hills or mountains to go over; but the way is the way, and there's an end.

Now, as they were going along, and talking, they espied a boy feeding his father's sheep. The boy was in very mean clothes, but of a fresh and well-favoured countenance, and as he sat by himself, he sung. Hark, said Mr. Greatheart, to what the shepherd's boy saith! so they hearkened, and he

said,

He that is down needs fear no fall; He that is low no pride; He that is humble ever shall Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have, Little be it or much; And, Lord! contentment still I crave, Because thou savest such.

Fulness to such a burden is,
That go on pilgrimage:
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

Then said their guide, do you hear him? I will dare to say this boy lives a merrier life and wears more of that herb called heart's-ease in his bosom than he that is clad in silk and velvet! but we will proceed in our discourse.

Bunyan.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 16.

GOD'S CONDESCENDING LOVE.

Ye servants of the Almighty king, In every age his praises sing; Where-e'er the sun shall rise or set, The nations shall his praise repeat.

Above the earth, beyond the sky, Stands his high throne of majesty; Nor time nor place his power restrain, Nor bound his universal reign.

Which of the sons of Adam dare, Or angels with their God compare? His glories how divinely bright, Who dwells in uncreated light!

Behold his love, he stoops to view What Saints above and angels do; And condescends yet more to know The mean affairs of men below.

Watts.

GOD'S WATCHFUL CARE. PSALM XXXIII.

1 Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

4 For the word of the LOED is right, and all his works are done in truth.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

11 The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts

of his heart to all generations. 13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the

sons of men. 14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him,

upon them that hope in his mercy;

19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive

20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our

21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

#### GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN.

"God is love." That we see displayed in the glories of heaven, in the wonders of nature. All we see tends to establish the conviction; it is announced by our Saviour, and yet, after all, how feeble is the impression which the glorious truth makes on but too many benighted minds.

Yet the soothing fact has been proclaimed by the wisdom of antiquity. The most eminent men of the olden time, as well as those most looked up to in our own day; the most refined, as well as the rudest nations, have all testified that God's wisdom and majesty are identified with love.

It however is not to be deemed that general as this impression has been, many fearful events have seemed to oppose it. When desolating war has spread misery over ravaged lands, the sorrowing sufferers have thought, in their wild dismay, that the visitation was from God. When the ocean has passed its bounds, and a wide spreading deluge has covered the face of the land, when earthquakes have threatened the general wreck of nature, and devouring fires have burst from the volcano, and sprung out of the bowels of the earth, to cause the destruction of thousands, nay millions of unhappy beings; sinking mountains; inhabited lands thrown into a yawning abyss; ships crowded with men foundering at sea, and pestilence raging far and wide on shore; when these things have been witnessed, the beholders have sadly asked, "can bad doings be the work of a God of love?" To this question they were disposed to answer, "no, they must have been commanded by a wrathful deity, thirsting for revenge, and glorying in the power of punishing his helpless, erring creatures, for the wanderings of a moment, with annihilation or never-ending misery.

Such an idea was conceived in the beginning of time, when the Eternal Creator was supposed to be but an Almighty man. It is given to Christians to know that he is not such. Our Redeemer has taught us that "God is love," a being so exalted, so pure, that human weakness, wrath, or repentance cannot be imagined in him. Even in the mortal man he censures the outbreak of the angry passions; how then can they be supposed to belong to the supreme Being, whose whole essence he announced to be goodness and love?

When the storm rages with terrifying violence, and all the awful phenomena of nature are seen, even then the proof is at hand that our

common parent is a God of love.

For, let us ask, even in these mighty convulsions, what is lost and destroyed? The body, the dust of which a human form has been composed. not the immortal part of man, the undying soul. It is not to be held that the termination of all worldly evil, is itself an evil; and is not death the end of earthly woe, and the commencement of a career of joy and glory? Though thousands and thousand of parents and children, of husbands and wives, are instantaneously removed by some convulsion of nature, is there a vast, a very important difference between death so encountered, and the arrival of "the inevitable hour" by sickness or age? These sufferers must, in the course of nature, within a few years have been called away. Shall we presume to think that that which is provided for all beings on earth, is an evil? If death be not an evil, the earthquake and the tempest, the deluge and the life-devouring pestilence, are hardly felt as such by those whom they are commissioned to remove. We are not more justified calling in question the loving kindness of our Maker when these are witnessed, than when we see our fellow-creatures die under less extraordinary circumstances. The bounty of God ought not to be doubted, because we are approaching what he has ordered shall be our final destiny.

The partial views we take of God's doings are likely to betray us into vain surmises and visionary speculations, which it is our duty and our interest to repress. Let us avoid this error and rejoice to know our God is a God of purity and love. Not in vain may this deeply rooted feeling be implanted in our hearts. His whole creation proves that he is indeed a "God of love." That we are persuaded of this is one of the proofs of its reality; this it is that binds heart to heart, and

unites us in kindly feeling towards each other. Every object on which our eyes can rest in the vast circle of creation, proves the Almighty to be rich in love and compassion. It breathes in his works, and has been confirmed by the declaration of our Saviour Jesus.

O then, thou who art the essence of eternal love, let not us, thy wandering, but still anxious children, be separated from thee by the snares and vanities of the world. Jesus Christ came to this world to conduct us to thee. O let it not appear that he was sent in vain. Let thy mercy forbid that spirits whom thou hast brought together here, shall be separated in eternity. In another state of being their hope and trust is to meet each other in thy presence, surrounding thee, the centre of all that is glorious and sublime.

The thought is rapture! God is indeed love and that which is identified with love cannot be miserable—cannot fear annihilation.

#### RELIGION A SOURCE OF JOY.

It is a scandalous misprision, vulgarly admitted, concerning religion, that it is altogether sullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour; whereas, on the contrary, it alone is the neverfailing source of true, pure, steady joy; such as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reason of things, permanent like the immortal spirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade or cloy; and is not subject to any impressions apt to corrupt or impair it: whereas our religion doth not only allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful, as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be sad for one minute, banishing the least fit of melancholy, charging us in all times, on all occasions to be cheerful; supposing, consequently, that it is in some manner possible to be so, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the transcendent goodness of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our sorrow to be our sin, adapting his holy will to our principal instinct; that he would have us to resemble himself, as in all other perfec-tions, so in a constant state of happiness; that as he hath provided a glorious heaven of bliss for us hereafter, so he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradise of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our religion in a tendency to produce joy in those who embrace it; for what is the gospel, but, as the holy angel, the first promulger of it, did report, "good tidings of great joy to all people?" How doth God represent himself therein, but as the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation, cheerfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but "that he may give us rest and refresh-ment to our souls;" that he may "wipe away all tears from our eyes; "that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us "in a blessed hope;" that we may "enter into our Master's joy;" that "our joy may be full," and such "as no man can take from us"?

Isaac Barrow.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 17.

#### A CHAMBER HYMN.

What though my frail eyelids refuse Continual watching to keep, And punctual as midnight renews, Demand the refreshment of sleep; A sovereign Protector I have, Unseen, yet for ever at hand: Unchangeably faithful to save, Almighty to rule and command.

From evil secure, and its dread, I rest, if my Saviour is nigh; And songs his kind presence indeed Shall in the night season supply: He smiles, and my comforts abound; His grace as the dew shall descend: And walls of salvation surround The soul he delights to defend.

Kind author and ground of my hope, Thee, Thee for my God I avow; My glad Ebenezer set up, And own thou hast helped me till now. I muse on the years that are past, Wherein my defence thou hast proved; Nor wilt thou relinquish at last, A sinner so signally loved.

Toplady.

#### CLEAVE TO THE LORD. JOSHUA, CHAP. XXII.

29 God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the Lord our God that is before his tabernacle.

#### CHAP. XXIII.

6 Be ye, therefore, very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

11 Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your

God hath given you.

16 When ye have transgressed the Covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

#### CHAP. XXIV.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consime you, after that he hath done you good.

#### WHAT IS MAN?

What am I? and from whence? I nothing know, But, that I am; and since I am, conclude Something eternal. Had there ere been nought, Nought, still, had been. Eternal, there must be: But, what eternal ?- Why not human race; And Adam's ancestors, without an end? That's hard to be conceived; since every link Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail. Can every part depend, and not the whole? Yet, grant it true; new difficulties rise;-I'm still, quite out at sea, nor, see the shore. Whence earth, and these bright orbs ?-eternal too ?-Grant, matter, was eternal; still, these orbs Would want some other Father .- Much design, Is seen in all their motions, all their makes. Design, implies intelligence, and art, That can't be from themselves, -or, man; that art, Man, scarce could comprehend, can man bestow? And nothing greater, yet, allowed than man. Who, motion,-foreign to the smallest grain-Shot through vast masses of enormous weight? Who bade brute matter's restive lump, assume Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly? Has matter innate motion? then, each atom, Asserting its indisputable right To dance, would form an universe of dust.

Young.

### MAN NEGLECTFUL OF GOD'S GOODNESS.

Again, O God! has thy infinite mercy granted us to look upon another morning. For our preservation up to this moment, we tender our humble, hearty thanks. Our life is ever in thy hands; but thou hast watched over us while we lay in unconscious slumber, and saved us from danger and death. We know "the watchman waketh in vain, if thou keepest not the city." Be that life duteously and gratefully devoted to thee, O Lord! which thou hast deigned to preserve. Accept the homage which we present before thy throne, while to thee we consecrate this matin hour. Adorable Creator! bear witness how ardently we covet to render our praise as fervent, as pure, as reverential, as that of the seraphs who surround thee in glory. Elevate the character of our devotions; let them glow with all the energy and fire fitted to embody with proper emphasis the extatic feelings which thrill our hearts while satisfied that we have found favour in thy sight, and are of the the number of thy adopted children.

We have held too lightly the grace hitherto extended to us, in our progress through life. How many morning suns have we seen rise, without remembering the bounty of which we were the object! Often have we risen from our beds, refreshed and strengthened, and experienced no gratitude for the goodness which had watched

over us, while stretched on what might have proved the bed of death. We marvel at our own insensibility, when we look back on the cold forgetfulness which was ours; but still more are we amazed at thy unwearying patience, which could endure the ingratitude that abused thy gracious indulgence. Henceforth it will be our care to keep ourselves more awake to our duty, nor suffer thy blessings to be conferred on us unheeding: far from it, we trust to be ever ready to admire thy goodness, and to sing thy glory. The countless benefits we have received excite our wonder not less than our thankfulness. We feel ourselves unworthy of such favour. But in proportion as we know we are debased, the voice of our gratitude shall be loud and sincere. We will strive more anxiously to deserve thy forbearance, and the song of our thankfulness, while life endures, shall know no end.

In the plenitude of thy mercy, O God! sustain the resolutions which this day has seen us avow, not in future to suffer the manifestations of thy glory and benevolence to pass unregarded. Dispel our blindness, open our eyes, that we may comprehend thy majesty. If thou awakenest not our hearts to a just perception of thy kindness, they may relapse into dull negligence, even under the most visible indications of thy benign providence. Through this day—through every succeeding day, we will acknowledge the benefits conferred by thy hand, however small, if aught that is small can be granted by thee; we will proclaim the ennobling compassion of our reconciled Father and God. Our neglect shall no longer be continued, and from hour to hour we will exult in possessing in thee a guide and a shield during this life, and a gracious benefactor for ever.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 17.

ALL CREATION PROCLAIMS GOD'S GLORY.

The heavens declare thy glory, Lord, Which that alone can fill; The firmament and stars express Their great Creator's skill.

The dawn of each returning day
Fresh beams of knowledge brings;
From darkest night's successive rounds
Divine instruction springs.

Their powerful language to no realm Or region is confined; 'Tis Nature's voice, and understood Alike by all mankind.

Watts.

#### ORDER OF CREATION. PSALM LXXIV.

12 For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

15 Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers.

16 The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

17 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

### NATURE'S VARIETIES A PLEDGE FOR GOD'S COVENANT.

"Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant."

The promise contained in this text has reference to the establishment of Christ's kingdom upon earth. It is now seen to have been accomplished; it comprehends both time and eternity, but the promise still remains, and may be held to apply to every devout believing Christian. determination and unchangeable faithfulness of God, is there set forth for our edification and comfort. It is the declaration of the Most High, that so long as the earth exists, the alternations of day and night shall know no end. The irrevocable character of this decree is constantly exemplified before our eyes. When the night is waning, we can most confidently reckon that the morning will dawn; and when the day closes, we know that night will, in the regularly adjusted order of nature succeed; that the planets will continue to pursue their mysterious course. This will not be discontinued so long as the sun is permitted to illumine this orb. The day will call us to our labour, and night give us repose to refresh our weary limbs and render us equal to the performance of a new task. Equally to be depended upon as the unchanging laws of nature, is the unalterable goodness of God to man. How exhilarating, how soothing, is that reflection! It cheers us when we open our eyes to the brightness of a new day; it tranquillises and sustains us when we sink on our couch at night. So often as our eyes are raised to the resplendent source of light above, the constancy of God's loving care ought to be vividly present to our souls. When the sinking sun's departing rays gild the summits

of the mountains or the loftiest towers, so often ought the liveliest sense of the Eternal's enduring mercy to be renewed in our bosoms. We are in close communion with him. To us he is an indulgent Parent, and we are his loving, though offending, children.

Gracious and Almighty Parent of all, we thank thee for the perceptions with which we are enabled to contemplate the beauties of the world, and the wonders of thy hand, and for enabling us duly to appreciate the richness of the gift. O purify our minds, that, spotless as the flowers which open their chalices to the sun's early beams, we may stand before thee, as the moment draws near in which we must render up our spirits, and be released from this world. Thankfully we desire to enjoy those gratifications which thou hast provided for thy creatures, but only so to know them as may be consistent with thy design, and with

thy glory.

Great God! in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," we pray, now retiring to rest, that we may awake refreshed in body and in health; that while we unconsciously recline, thy outstretched overshadowing wings may protect us from all danger. Though our sleep is the image of death, our bed that of the tomb, we trust, when the sun shall again ascend the skies, to start up with new energy, even as eventually we shall burst from the bondage of the grave, and pass from the corruption of mortality to the perfection of eternity. For such hopes, how shall we hymn thy praise? We cannot find language to utter what thou hast graciously done for us, and for all mankind, but we will gratefully acknowledge thy bounty in life and in death, and bless thy name for ever.

To thee, O God, all our hopes turn for comfort here, for salvation hereafter. We feel that we are nothing without thee. Thou art our guide, our light, our hope, our all! By thy blessed Spirit we trust to be led on to the fulfilment of our destiny. Up to this hour thy grace has upheld and assisted us; it will not desert us now, it will not fail us in our future years. Thou hast sustained us as on eagles' wings; thou hast pitied us, sinners as we are, who wish but to live or die the objects of thy favouring care. Let thy infinite wisdom still enlighten our path, cheer us with thy continued favour, and conduct us in safety through this tedious pilgrimage to life everlasting!

THE VARIETIES OF NATURE PROVE THE GOODNESS OF GOD

How frequently is the face of nature changed! and, by changing, made more agreeable !- The long-continued glitter of the day renders the soothing shades of the evening doubly welcome. Nor does the morn ever purple the east with so engaging a lustre as after the gloom of a dark and dismal night. At present, a calm of tranquillity is spread through the universe. The weary winds have forgot to blow. The gentle gales have fanned themselves asleep. Not so much as a single leaf nods: even the quivering aspen rests; and not one breath curls over the stream. Sometimes, on the contrary, the tempest summons all the forces of the air, and pours itself, with resistless fury, from the angry north. The whole atmosphere is tossed into tumultuous confusion, and the watery world is heaved to the clouds. The astonished mariner, and his straining vessel, now scale the rolling mountain, and hang dreadfully visible on the broken surge: now shoot, with headlong impetuosity, into the yawning gulph: and neither hulk nor mast is seen. The storm sweeps over the continent, raves along the city streets, struggles through the forest boughs, and terrifies the savage nations with a howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty oaks bend before the blast, their iron trunks groan, and their stubborn limbs are dashed to the ground. The lofty dome rocks, and even the solid tower totters on its basis.

Such variations are kindly contrived, and with an evident condescension to the fickleness of our taste; because a perpetual repetition of the same objects would create satiety and disgust; therefore, the indulgent Father of our race has diversified the universal scene, and bid every appearance bring

with it the charm of novelty.

# MORNING.-JANUARY 18.

GOD THE SUPPORT OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

My God, the steps of pious men Are ordered by thy will; Though they should fall, they rise again, Thy hand supports them still.

The Lord delights to see their ways, Their virtue he approves: He'll ne'er deprive them of his grace, Nor leave the man he loves.

The heavenly heritage is theirs, Their portion and their home; He feeds them now, and makes them heirs Of blessings long to come.

Wait on the Lord, ye sons of men, Nor fear when tyrants frown; Ye shall confess their pride was vain, When justice cast them down.

Watts.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. PSALM IX.

1 I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.

7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared

his throne for judgment. 8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: For thou, LORD hast not forsaken them that seek thee. 11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion:

declare among the people his doings.

18 For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.

### GOD'S OBJECT IN CREATING MAN.

Why it was the will of God to place us in this world, is a question of great importance, and one that we onght often to put to ourselves, especially when, in a manner, we propose entering upon a new career. We should not act very rationally if always moving forward in the path of life, we never gave a thought to the object of our journey, or its probable issue. Here, before we advance another step, let us pause and enquire for what purpose it was that the Governor of the Universe called us into existence.

Brief reflection must satisfy our hearts that this world is not our home. Our sufferings, our very sins, and the few years allotted to us, assure us that we are but temporary guests on the earth, or pilgrims who have a brief progress to make. It is, however, the will of our God that during our stay here, we should so occupy ourselves as in some degree to exalt his glory: and that we should strive to benefit our fellow-creatures. We are bound to exert our powers, such as they may be, to comfort and assist other mortals doomed with us to pass through this perplexing scene. Fulfilling these conditions, the conditions on which life is conceded to us, our Maker has graciously promised that he will give us all that is requisite for our well being, and assured us of his most valued approbation if we walk in his ways, and, as faithful servants, diligently employ talents such as we have had confided to our keeping. We have not lost sight of the encouraging assurance of our Saviour, "Blessed are those who are pure of heart," and sad is the reflection which forces itself on our minds when we reflect how little we have done as yet, to work out our own salvation.

About to resume those cares which have been appointed to us, let us seriously ponder on the solemnity which we have to perform. O God! in the fulness of thy compassion, grant that our lives may be spent in such a way as will not be displeasing to thy all-seeing eye. Let us not misapply our powers, nor dishonour our professions as Christians, but be it our anxious endeavour zealously to employ ourselves in advancing the good of our brethren. Be it ours to tread in the footsteps of our blessed Lord, ever assiduous to succour men, always resolute to honour God's holy name. Faithfully performing this task, O merciful father, in thy kind providence give us our daily bread, and bestow those gifts and desires which may promote our happiness in the world to come.

Indebted to thy grace for a living spirit, which has been made by the sufferings of our Redeemer, the heir of immortality in his holy name, O God! we pray thee to enable us worthily to acquit ourselves of those duties imposed by our peculiar situation. Let thy light shine upon us, that we may life as true Christians ought to live, and eventually find a happy death. When earthly trifles are intruded on our thoughts, give us strength to withdraw from them, and let eternity be the object of our thoughts, that we may act as becomes citizens of Heaven. Grant that through this day our souls may not be so entangled with meaner things as to lose sight of the world to come. Impart thy grace, that we may mentally profit by whatever shall now take place, so that whatever accident may await us in the course of this day, we may be prepared serenely to meet it with a constant mind. Let the eternity to which we still approach, encourage and fortify our hearts, so that if, by the indulgence of thy supreme Majesty, we are permitted to see the shades of night again descend, we may rejoicingly feel we can never regret having lived through the day.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 18.

THE WISH OF THE REDEEMED.

I ask not honour, pomp, or praise, By worldly men esteemed, I want from sin's deceitful ways To feel my soul redeemed.

I want, as faithful Christians do,
Dear Lord to live to thee;
And by my words and walk to shew
That thou has died for me.

O grant me, through thy precious blood, Thy gospel thus to grace; Till I, my Saviour, Lord and God! Shall see thee face to face.

Bretheren's Collection.

ABOUNDING GRACE MAY BE OBTAINED FROM GOD.
II. COBINTHIANS, CHAP. IX.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficierty in all things, may abound to every good work: 9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which

causeth through us thanksgiving to God;

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men:

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

### GOD TO BE WORSHIPPED IN LOVE.

O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference; whereon,
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution joined, If ye be found
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?

To whom the Angel: -Son of Heaven and Earth, Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God; That thou continuest such, owe to thyself, That is, to thy obedience; therein stand. This was that caution given thee; be advised. God made thee perfect, not immutable; And good he made thee, but to persevere He left it in thy power; ordained thy will By nature free, not over-ruled by fate Inextricable, or strict necessity: Our voluntary service he requires, Not our necessitated; such with him Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve Willing or no, who will but what they must By destiny, and can no other choose? Myself, and all the angelic host, that stand In sight of God, enthroned, our happy state Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds; On other surety none: Freely we serve, Because we freely love, as in our will To love or not; in this we stand or fall. Milton.

# PERFECTION MUST BE AIMED AT BY THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN.

That man makes the nearest approach to the image of God, who learns to control his passions, and permits them to betray him into no culpable excesses, but, treading in the paths of a crucified Jesus, suffers his hand to commit no action which can distract his inward peace, and afflict his mind with the hopeless horrors of remorse.

But even self-control is not the highest step to

perfection which we may reach. A higher doctrine than this—a higher doctrine than that which had been preached by the sages of antiquity, was preached by our Redeemer. Before he came into this world, wise and virtuous men had advocated as the greatest—as the most ennobling of human attainments, self-knowledge and self-control, at the same time maintaining that every man might acquire them. This was taught before the coming of Christ, by men to whom eternity and judgment, seeing they, unassisted as we are by the light of revelation, were but as a dark presentiment.

When our Saviour appeared, by his precepts and example to instruct mankind, from his devoted followers he required more. He first demanded self-knowledge, for without that no man could be aware of the extent of his sins, or of the means by which the repetition of them might be avoided. Self-control and self-denial be also insisted upon, because he who cannot restrain his passions and desires, becomes their abject slave, and is no true follower of Christ. Above all, he called upon his disciples to seek some similitude with God, by exerting greatness of soul, as far as this could be effected by mortals.

How did he inculcate this? He told his followers it was not enough that they should check their anger; they must do more. It was for them to love their enemies. His injunction was, "bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you, that you may be the children of your father that is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect."

Even such, is the greatness of soul which the author of our salvation requires, from those who aspire to be deemed true Christians. It ought to be the object of universal attainment. difficult, it is not impossible. Jesus Christ, though created a man with all the weaknesses of human nature about him, showed by his own sublime example, how closely perfection might be approached in this life. Stimulated by his words and actions, multitudes followed him, who in their love of truth and justice, and the sublimer virtues, were bravely resolved to sacrifice all the enjoyments and all the treasures of life. They gave up in the sacred cause of friendship, love, honour, freedom, and even life itself. Why should not we be able to do the same, unmoved by the scoffs of worldly minded men, who might call us enthusiasts or bigots. When God prompts such a movement in our hearts, we may smile at the derision of men given up to sensual pursuits and unholy desires.

Glorious Redeemer! pure type of that spotlessness which must exist in the world of spirits, through whom God and nature speak to our understandings, with more than mortal eloquence; thou, who art identified with both, is it not thy divine example which fills our minds? The multitude which followed thee, understood thee not: they looked but at worldly things, at pomp and favour in connection with mortal concerns, whilst thy glorious mind was wholly occupied with the will and charge of thy Almighty Father.

Fain, O Jesus, would we become thy followers—fain would we resemble thee, or why, at the baptismal font, were we admitted into thy community. Thy holy life, thy divine precepts shall ever live in our hearts, and we will conquer every obstacle in the way of our gaining that elevation of mind which belongs to thy sincere followers.

Eternal Creator! it is thine to judge and thine to forgive. What will our mortal frames be when once they sink in the cold embrace of Death? They will then be but as so many worn out garments. This life, when closed, will be regarded but as a vain and strangely varied dream, the objects of which, when our eyes unclose, we behold no more. We are spirits, and heaven is the home of spirits. There will our Saviour be found. Speed us thither—advance us on our way to him. Let thy kingdom come, O God!

### MORNING.—JANUARY 19.

### THE LAST MOMENT.

Almighty power who hung this ball In space, and life bestowed on all; Now waft thy servant to that shore Where sin and sorrow are no more.

My spirit, long in exile here, Called home to thy celestial sphere, Shall like the lark at morn arise, With songs of rapture to the skies.

In mercy, he who loves the just, Consigns my body to the dust; And ends mortality's career Of foolish hope, and idle fear.

He calls my panting soul away, With joy his bidding I obey; Death! close the dream of joyless strife, And wake me to substantial life.—A.

### GOD'S PEOPLE THOUGH DEAD SHALL LIVE, -ISAIAH XXVI

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHO-

VAH is everlasting strength:

7 The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to

the remembrance of thee.

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea. with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out

### ENCOURAGE THOUGHTS OF DEATH.

The thought of death indulge; Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign, That kind chastiser of thy soul in joy! Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far, And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast: Auspicious era! golden days, begin!
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire. And why not think on death? Is life the theme Of every thought? and wish of every hour? And song of every joy? Surprising truth! The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange. To wave the numerous ills that seize on life As their own property, their lawful prey; Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage, His luxuries have left him no reserve. No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights: On cold serv'd repetitions he subsists, And in the tasteless present chews the past; Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down. Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years Have disinherited his future hours, Which starve on orts, and glean their former field. Live ever here, Lorenzo! shocking thought! So shocking, they who wish, disown it too; Disown from shame what they from folly crave. Young.

### PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

Not yet have our eyes become clouded, no destroying fever runs through our veins, nor do our knees totter from age and weakness, scarcely able to sustain an emaciated frame; nor are we extended pale and gasping on the bed of death, from which we can hope to rise no more. We still live: we can gaze on the light of heaven, we retain all our faculties, and have the power of sounding the praise of our Almighty Creator, and can submit to him the cravings of our souls. It is by thy grace, O God, that we have been permitted to wake to another day, and we offer the homage of our thankfulness that we still survive. Yet while we thus exult, we cannot escape from the thought that we are frail perishable mortals. The hour may not be far distant, when our earthly existence must close. This day may see it arrive, nay, even before we close the devotions in which we are now engaged, we may find ourselves called upon to depart.

The thought is fearful. We confess that it gives us grief to know that we are ever in danger of losing life: always exposed to the pains of death. and liable from hour to hour to be called before thy awful judgment seat. Whatever our present felicity, we know that it is evanescent, that it cannot be of long duration. The conviction is humiliating, it depresses our spirits so far that. possessed of such gloomy ideas, we lose our wonted composure. It has been thy pleasure, O Lord! to surround us with numerous objects to remind us of the approach of death. The shortness of our days, the falling leaves, the rising vapours, the passing smoke, and the tolling bell, all solemnly warn us that we must shortly die. Shall we then be so weak as to shut our eyes to the obvious truth, and try to persuade ourselves that that event which may be close at hand, is still at a great distance. Merciful father, let us ever bear in mind that death is inevitable, and so to regulate our thoughts and feelings, that all that is dreadful in the association may vanish. Vouchsafe to us the felicity of knowing that through faith in our divine Redeemer, we may triumph over the infirmity of our nature; and feel that this world is the appointed conveyance which is to bear us to a life that will know no end, to a state of everlasting joy. When such a glorious consolation is held out, why should the change which must necessarily take place in us, inspire horror? By faith we may learn to look on "the bitterness of death" with fortitude, as the only means by which we can approach eternal life. Instead of being disturbed by its coming, we shall then be able to contemplate it with cheerful expectation, and prepared to welcome it as the angel of peace. Then will a sweet serenity come over our souls. Be thou, O God, supremely praised for the knowledge granted to us, that through the merits of a Saviour we may be permitted to share thy glory. Strengthen us in the trials we may yet have to bear, give us courage in the hour of tribulation, and let our growing confidence in thy mercy evermore increase as we advance to the tomb, that even in death our tongues may be employed in sounding thy praise.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 19.

THE BOOK OF NATURE.

Great God, the heaven's well ordered frame Declares the glories of thy name; There thy rich works of wonder shine; A thousand starry beauties there, A thousand radiant marks appear, Of boundless power, and skill divine.

From night to day, from day to night,
The dawning and the dying light,
Lectures of heavenly wisdom read;
With silent eloquence they raise
Our thoughts to our Creator's praise,
And neither sound nor language need.

Yet their divine instructions run
Far as the journies of the sun,
And every nation knows their voice:
The sun, like some young bridegroom drest,
Breaks from the chambers of the east,
Rolls round, and makes the earth rejoice.

Where'er he spreads his beams abroad. He smiles, and speaks his Maker, God: All nature joins to shew thy praise: Thus God in every creature shines; Fair as the book of of nature's lines. But fairer is thy book of grace.

Watts.

WORKS OF CREATION. GENESIS, CHAP. II.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LOBD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 ¶ And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil

knowledge of good and evil.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx-stone.

13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

### GOD'S GREATNESS SEEN IN THE CREATION.

To thee, Omnipotent Creator and Preserver of the world!—uncreated, creating cause of all being, and glorious parent of the whole human race!—source

of light and life, and of all perfection! to thee, while the sun declines in the heavens, we lift our thoughts, and desire to forward to thy throne the humble offering of our heartfelt adoration. It is only by thus exalting our ideas, that our every hour can be rendered joyous, and all our pleasures ennobled and sanctified. Holy and Almighty wert thou before the morning star proclaimed thy glory—before the faltering accents of man could attempt to sing thy praise. Of what felicity should we deprive ourselves of what ingratitude should we be guilty, could we weakly forget thy goodness! When our thoughts dwell upon thee, our hearts are lifted up above the earth; and as we experience that to celebrate thy greatness is the sweetest exercise our powers can be equal to in this world, so we feel it will be our most delightful and glorious occupation

Great First Cause of all! to thee all we know. all we see, all we can conceive, conducts our minds. The mysterious phenomena of nature, the traditions of bygone ages, the stupendous monuments of antiquity, all demonstrate to us the mighty commencement, the great work of creation, as recorded by Moses, for the instruction of mankind. It was thy good pleasure to give form and substance to this orb on which we dwell. At thy dread fiat the world appeared. Thy command was given, "Let there be light," and there was light. Then was the ocean separated from the dry land, the mountains raised their heads, the rivers learned to flow, and the moon commenced her course. The face of nature was adorned with herbs, flowers, and trees, the air, the earth, and the waters were filled with living varieties, and man, formed in thine own image, was finally called into existence, the undisputed Lord of all below.

For thy marvellous bounty in fashioning us after thine own image, accept, O God, the homage of our admiring gratitude! When we contemplate the wondrous works of thy mighty hand, we are lost in astonishment at the proofs of thy majesty, at the consciousness of our own utter insignificance. Dead to every good and holy feeling must we be, feeling this, did we not bow in unaffected humility before thy throne. The splendour of thy glory, as the brightness of the sun overpowers the naked eye, would to us be insupportable, had not thy compassionate providence tempered it to our view by the labours of our divine Saviour. Through him we know that, exalted as thou art, the centre of innumerable

worlds and creatures, we still are the objects of thy peculiar care, and to thee we may look for comfort and support, as a child turns to its parent. Thou hast made us, and thou wilt behold with pity the sorrows of thy creatures. Assist us, that all our doings may be such as become thy children. Confidently depending on thy goodness, in all our trials, thy greatness and power shall be our comfort and joy.

How vast, how numerous are thy works! The earth is full of thy wonders, and all prove thy wisdom. Can we withhold the tribute of our admiration, when we contemplate the harmony and beauty of the several parts of the universe! Thousands of years have elapsed since their creation, yet the stars in our solar system pursue, without deviation or decay, their bright prescribed career. Still the desirable changes of light and darkness succeed each other, and summer and winter in like manner are sent in their turn for our support and gratification. For the most minute insect, as well as the most stupendous being in thy living creation, thy care has provided, and thy unfailing wisdom is equally conspicuous in the shining planet, the floating atom, the ponderous elephant, the bounding fly, the sun's ray, and the verdure of the fields. To all creatures their appropriate place and office have been assigned in the mighty chain of existence. Their being is a proof of thine; their endless varieties tell of thy might and eternal duration. The wisdom manifested in thy works should teach us ever to look up to thee with joyful confidence.

Do we sometimes mark discord and confusion in the world? Yes, we behold noble and generous designs frustrated, meekness and piety oppressed, the wicked exalted. To us these suggest contradictions not to be accounted for, but still let us put our trust in thee. It is thine, we know, to regulate by thy wise administration all things, and by thy care, at last, good will come from evil. Thou bringest light from darkness, and all that is for the time perplexed and discordant, will ultimately resolve itself into purest harmony.

Sovereign of the universe, we humbly address to thee our adoration. The mole from its hillock can more easily survey the kingdom in which it is placed, than can man, weak man, contemplate all thy hand has made. We know the star which we behold at an immeasurable distance, marks but the vestibule of thy exalted palace; it is but a part of the suburbs of thy celestial capital. Our sublimest flight of thought cannot worthily ap-

proach thy footstool. All we behold tells of God our Father the great Creator. By our divine Saviour a more glorious light has been poured upon us than ever shone upon a heathen land; by his blessed Spirit we have been led to know thee, and the wonderful things which thou hast done for the benefit of mankind. O, then, may we ever join to sing the praises of our God, of our beneficent protector above the sky.

### GOD DEFENDS HIS CREATURES.

"Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Thou art here forewarmed of thine enemies: they shall gather against thee. But the Lord is not with them. He is thy defender and mighty deliverer, and he will bring all opposition to nought for thy sake. However numerous their hosts may be, yet they shall fall. Whatever weapons of war they may form, yet none of them shall prosper. This is the certain heritage of all true believers. Their righteousness and their strength is of me, saith the Lord—I will fight their battles, and I will never leave them nor forsake them: I will make them daily conquerors; and behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised them, and I will make them more than conquerors.

Romaine

### MORNING.—JANUARY 20.

RELY ON GOD.

O thou, my soul, on God rely,
On him alone thy trust repose:
My rock and help will still supply
To bear the shock of all my foes.

God does his saving health dispense, And flowing blessings daily send; He is my fortress and defence, On him my soul shall still depend.

In him, ye people, always trust, Before his throne pour out your hearts; For God, the merciful and just, His timely aid to us imparts.

The Lord has oft his will express'd,
And I this truth have fully known,
To be of boundless power possess'd
Belongs of right to God alone.

Drummond's Collection.

GOD'S MERCY PROVED TO THE JUST. PSALM XLL.

- 4 I said, Lord be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.
- 5 Mine enemy speaks evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?
- 6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.
  7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against

me do they devise my hurt.

8 An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity.

### STRENGTH OF MIND SOUGHT FROM ABOVE.

While in this imperfect state of being, it is our duty to use all means within our reach, to elevate our minds, and to render ourselves less unworthy in the sight of our Creator. We must be sedulously on our guard not to be tempted from our road, and most resolutely labour to get over every impediment that would deter us from seeking to lead a godly life. Impure desires should be resolutely combated, and, feeling how much we are deficient, all our thoughts, all our hopes, must turn to our Redeemer, who alone can save us from perdition. We have not borne this sufficiently in mind. We may have been secretly too vain of our good actions, and too negligent of our Maker's bounty. What are we without Christ? What our best virtues, if he did not live in our hearts, to sanctify and direct them to proper objects. He is the star of Bethlehem, which is to guide us to happiness. How great is the goodness of the Almighty to have given us such a guide! But for him, whither might our steps not have wandered? He only can lead us to the right path, and keep us in it.

Had we not this sincere conviction for the sequel of our lives, we might justly tremble. How soon might we forfeit the grace which has been vouchsafed to us! The wicked world, and our own sinful inclinations might draw us from the narrow path which leads to heaven. Let us rejoice that we are not left wholly to ourselves, that he who sees our frailty aids us with his holy spirit. Knowing we are under his all-sufficient care, we may joyfully advance in the hope that as men and as Christians, we shall not fail to accom-

plish our prescribed career.

We already foresee that we shall be exposed to many temptations in the course of this day. We shall have to maintain a contest with the world, and with ourselves. Be thou our Captain, O God! and we shall triumph. Withdraw not thy needful aid from thy feeble creatures. Enable us to detect the snares spread for our feet that we may avoid the danger. Save us from the corrupting vanities of life, that we may ever bear in mind thy word, and observe thy commandments. Impart thy wisdom, show us thy truth; in thee. O God, we confide.

To all our bretheren, O Lord, who enjoy the same faith with us, be pleased to extend thy bounty, that all may be animated with the same hope. Let none stray from the fold—let none be lost. Have mercy on all sinners who are now in darkness, recall them from their wanderings to find the way of salvation. Even those who have reached the verge of the tomb in sin, have mercy upon, for the sake of thy divine Son our Lord. Strengthen the confidence of all thy worshippers, and confirm them in holiness, to the end that, ever faithful in thee, they may glorify thy holy name: and grant, when completed our earthly pilgrimage, that we may all assemble round thy glorious throne, to know the perfection of peace and blessedness. Listen, O Lord, to these our prayers, and accept our thanks and adoration, now, henceforth, and through all eternity.

### HOW TO PROVE FAITH.

Let us impartially examine, if we possess faith, the same in kind with that of Moses, the man of God. The less we are exposed at present to external trials, the more need we have to be rigorous in trying ourselves. Nor do we know how soon a change may occur. Are we prepared to cast in our lot with the people of God, and to suffer affliction and reproach with them, enduring as seeing him that is invisible, and having respect to a future reward? God has a people now, though not so visibly distinguished as Israel; yet really, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. They were not all Israel then, who were of Israel: not all like Caleb and Joshua. If some now enjoy a share of worldly property and respectability, let not these things seduce them to be shy of any truth, duty, or ordinance of God, to preserve their reputation among unbelievers, or subserve any worldly end. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and whatever worldly accommodations are granted, account it somewhat more than your bargain; which you should use for God while it is granted, and resign to-morrow, or to-day, if called to it.

Ryland.

### EVENING.-JANUARY 20.

### THE FEAR OF DEATH REPELLED.

The lying tempter would persuade There's no relief in heaven, And all my swelling sins appear Too big to be forgiv'n.

But thou, my glory and my strength, Shall on the tempter tread, Shalt silence all my threat'ning guilt, And raise my drooping head.

I cried, and from his holy hill
He bowed a listening ear!
I called my Father and my God,
And he subdued my fear.

He shed soft slumbers on mine eyes, In spite of all my foes; I 'woke, and wondered at the grace That guarded my repose.

What tho' the host of death and hell All armed against me stood, Terrors no more shall shake my soul; My refuge is my God.

Watts.

### GOD CHASTENS THOSE HE LOVES. DEUT. VIII.

5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord

thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

7 For the LOED thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and

pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given

thee.

11 Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

12 Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built

goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied:

14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God.

### GOD TO BE PRAISED FOR ALL HE HAS WILLED.

While all the hierarchy of heaven join to glorify thy name, O God! we, whom thou hast formed out of dust, desire with one accord to raise our thoughts to thee in prayer and praise. Purify, strengthen, and sanctify us, and make us equal to all good works, filled with that compassionate love in which the blessed Jesus lived and died. Comfort us, O God, when, by reason of our unworthiness, our hearts sink, despairing of thy future favours. Without thy aid we can accomplish nothing. Enable us to become more holy, reassure our fainting spirits, and let us feel that, sustained by thy mercy, we may safely dismiss all fear.

Of the pious departed, we read, "they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Such is the happy state of those who have suffered for the honour of God. The joy of their present state compensates them for all past sorrows. May we join them in heaven: may we be cheered by hearing the solemn words applied to us, "call the labourers that they may receive their reward." We know that in another world we shall reap what we have sown in this, nor can it be too often impressed on our minds, that with this world, all is not to end; that a virtuous career on earth will conduct us to a blessed eternity in the realm of departed spirits. There, if we have good works to follow us, our happiness will be great indeed. If adversity and severe privations await us in this world, all will be largely compensated in the next.

The rest we nightly share after the fatigues of the day, is an apt representative of the sweet repose which will be ours in the world to come. How grateful and refreshing is sleep after a day of useful industry. It cheers the wretched, it restores the weary. Night and sleep are appropriated by the great author of all for the needful solace of man. How wretched is he whose conscience keeps him waking, and whose culpable dissipation forbids sleep to administer that nourishment which happier minds derive from it. How careful we ought to be to secure for ourselves this important blessing, by constant activity and praiseworthy exertions.

And if exercise be desirable for the comfort of the body, O how necessary is it for the mind! Feeling this, we thank thee, O Lord, for permitting us to see the close of another day. The sinking sun we behold no more; the face of creation wears the veil of night; men and animals compose them to sleep; but ere we seek our pillow, we desire to offer our evening sacrifice. and to thank thee for the opportunity we have of doing good, and for all mercies. Seeking that rest which our nature claims, let us feel that thou wilt still guard us as a fond father watches over his child. From us and all belonging to us, remove every danger while we slumber in unconsciousness. In thee O Lord! in thee alone, can we hope to find true repose. Thou art the source of all happiness, and we thank thee even for concealing from us what our future lot in this life is to be. Did we know that prosperity will be ours, we might become supercilious, unfeeling, and neglectful of duty; were we aware that misery awaits us, we might want confidence in thee, and yield ourselves up to unbecoming dismay. Come what will, it is by thy decree, and what thou ordainest must be ultimately for our good. This

world is not destined to be the scene of perfect rest. Clouds overhang our prospects, affliction will assail, but if patient and resigned a day of unclouded splendour will at length open upon us through the goodness of our God. Gracious father, look down in pity upon those who innocently suffer, and whose sleepless eyes now overflow with burning tears. Let hope shine upon sufferers in prison, on a troubled sea, in the hut of poverty, or on the bed of sickness. Permit us in the morning to rise in health, again to worship thee: but O, if thou in thy wisdom should order that this night be our last on earth, then graciously conduct us to lasting repose. After all our cares and labours, let us know the sacred transport of reaching that blessed haven where thy people rejoice. Grant that we may share the home of happy spirits in the sky, and bless us with a foretaste of it here below.

### THE SOUL SECURE IN CHRIST.

Coming sinner, Christ inviteth thee to dine and sup with nim: He inviteth thee to a banquet of wine, yea, to come unto his wine cellar, and his banner over thee shall be love, Rev. xx. 20. Song ii. 5. But I doubt it, says the sinner; but it is answered, he calls thee, invites thee to this banquet, flaggons, apples, to his wine, and to the juice of his pomegranate. O, I fear, I doubt, I mistrust, I tremble in expectation of the contrary! Come out of the man, thou dastardly ignorance. Be not afraid, sinner only believe, 'he that cometh to Christ, we will in no wise cast out.'

Let the coming sinner therefore seek after more of the good knowledge of Jesus Christ: press after it, seek it as silver and dig for it as for hid treasure. This will embolden thee; this will make thee wax stronger and stronger. 'I know, in whom I have believed, I know him,' said Paul; and what follows? Why I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him; against that day,' 2 Tim, i. 12.

What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ? The answer is, He had committed to Christ his soul. But why did he commit his soul to him? Why, because he knew him: He knew him to be faithful, to be kind: He knew he would not fail him, nor forsake him: and therefore he laid his soul down at his feet, and committed it to him, to keep again that day. Bunyan.

### MORNING-JANUARY 21.

WORLDLY CARE DISMISSED.

Now then my Way, my Truth, my Life, Henceforth let sorrow, doubt, and strife, Drop off like autumn leaves; Henceforth, as privileged by thee, Simple and undistracted be My soul, which to thy mercy cleaves.

Let me my weary mind recline
On that eternal love of thine,
And human thoughts forget;
Child-like attend what thou wilt say,
Go forth and do it while 'tis day,
Yet never leave my safe retreat.

At all times to my spirit bear An inward witness, soft and clear, Of thy redeeming power; Thus will thy child enabeld be In all things to yield joy to thee, And live unto thy praise each hour.

Bretheren's Collection.

FLEETING CHARACTER OF THE GRANDEUR OF EARTH. ISAIAH, CHAP. XXIV.

1 Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word.

4 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordi-

nance, broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of

the earth are burned, and few men left.
7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the

merry-hearted do sigh.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink

shall be bitter to them that drink it.

17 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

18 And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

# THE PLEASURES OF LIFE BENEATH A CHRISTIAN'S CARE.

When stedfastly examined by a carefully inquiring mind, how unsubstantial, how essentially valueless, do those objects appear, for which in this world we have been disposed to strive, as if on their possession depended our all of happiness. When gained, they have never afforded perfect lasting satisfaction, and have often been the cause of deep regret and bitter tears. We have not felt this alone: in every part of the habitable globe, mankind, in all conditions, from the naked beggar to the monarch on his throne, have had the like experience. None of the glittering objects we covet from time to time, can secure to us peace of mind. Surrounded with gaiety, we are still far from happy. The world, and all its most gorgeous pageantry, cannot suffice for a soul that feels itself born to immortality.

Then why suffer ourselves to be disturbed on

account of objects merely terrestrial. Had we nothing to look for in heaven, then indeed we might lament that our Maker had given us a nature so incapable of being satisfied with enjoyment. But the utter insignificance which we are enabled to detect in the fugitive pleasures of life, supply proof that we are destined to soar to a more glorious state of being. Our feeble bodies. our anxious cares, and every thing connected with our present feelings, assures us that we may aspire to a home in heaven.

This ought to cheer and animate. It is unworthy of immortal spirits to suffer themselves to be disturbed about objects of such fleeting interest as have sometimes occupied our minds. Considering what we owe to our own dignity, let us seek privileges of suitable importance. The high distinction of Christianity, the hope imparted by the merits of a Saviour, and the certainty of life after death, these are the images our minds should love to cherish. Provided they are duly appreciated, how contemptible must the evanescent allurements of this world appear! Let us, deeply impressed with this important truth, repudiate them with unvielding resolution, and labour only for those which await us in a happier state of

The passing day will not fail to supply many examples of the trifling character of all earthly enjoyments. Grant, O Lord! that of those we may wisely avail ourselves. To those unfading joys which Jesus has purchased for his followers, let us direct our attention. For those alone be it ours to strive; and be the course of our lives easy or painful, bearing in mind that we are the heirs of immortality, so we can render ourselves acceptable in the sight of the Great Creator, our spirits humbly confiding in his goodness, will rejoice.

### USES OF ADVERSITY.

Afflictions scour us of our rust. Adversity, like winter weather, is of use to kill those vermin, which the summer of

prosperity is apt to produce and nourish.

Every vessel of mercy must be scoured, in order to brightness. And however trees in the wilderness may grow without culture; trees in the garden must be pruned, to be made fruitful: and corn-fields must be broken up, when barren heaths are left untouched.

The Church below is often in a suffering state. Christ himself was a man of sorrows; nor should his bride be a wife of pleasures. Dr. Arrowsmith.

Through Christ's satisfaction for sin, the very nature of affliction is changed, with regard to believers. As death, which was, at first, the wages of sin, is now become a bed of rest (they shall rest upon their beds, saith the prophet); so afflictions are not the rod of God's anger, but the gentle physic Dr. Crisp. of a tender Father.

The Lord's wise love feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with wants and desertions.

It is a good sign, when the Lord blows off the blossoms of our forward hopes in this life, and lops the branches of our worldly joys to the very root, on purpose that they should not thrive. Lord, spoil my fool's heaven in this life, that I may be saved for ever! Rutherfoord.

### EVENING.—JANUARY

### SAFETY IN GOD.

When overwhelmed with grief, My heart within me dies, Helpless, and far from all relief, To heav'n I lift mine eyes.

O lead me to the rock That's high above my head, And make the covert of thy wings My shelter and my shade.

Within thy presence, Lord, For ever I'll abide : Thou art the tower of my defence, The refuge where I hide.

Thou givest me the lot Of those that fear thy name; If endless life be their reward, I shall possess the same.

Watts.

### RELIANCE UPON GOD. PSALM LV.

1 Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication.

2 Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint,

and make a noise;

3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked; for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. 4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of

death are fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror

hath overwhelmed me. 6 And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! for then

would I fly away and be at rest. 16 As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall

save me. 17 Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry

aloud: and he shall hear my voice. 22 Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

### THE CHRISTIAN IN DISTRESS.

Musing on the numerous calamities of life to which we are exposed, the heart is sometimes sad, and tempted to lament the general fate of man as most unhappy. From our weak capacities, and vicious inclinations, how many fearful errors are committed which produce in their consequences the bitterest sorrow. Too certain it is, that man brings much of his affliction on himself; but some visitations are reserved from him which

no prudence, no foresight on his part could avert. We, however, instead of enlarging on the anguish he may know, shall be better employed turning our thoughts to those consolations which Almighty wisdom has prepared to sooth the sufferer. Oh! may we be found awake to these, and, under all circumstances, learn to confide in God! holds our destinies in his hand, and suffers evil to assail, that in due season it may bring forth good. His providence rules all the vicissitudes we are fated to experience. When we are admitted nearer to the eternal councils, we shall better comprehend why this world was constituted as it is, learn to exult in those events which at present we deplore, and see that our ultimate welfare has been constantly the object of the great supreme. If our troubles are not small, we must not suppose that others do not suffer in a like degree. The mean, the exalted, the rich, the poor, the wise and the simple, all have their appropriate burdens: and many we should find, could a just comparison be instituted, have been subjected to severer trials than those appointed to fall to our share.

We thank thee, O Gracious Creator! for all the favours conferred by thy bounty, and for the preservation of our lives to the close of this day. All good comes from thee, and thy divine providence and resistless might can change affliction into rejoicing. Weak as we are, we should be more overpowered by unbroken prosperity than by misfortunes, and therefore the seasons of adversity which we are doomed to know, are but evidences of thy mercy. As that which we have deemed beneficial has proved hollow, deceitful, and the very opposite of what it first appeared, so that which we have lamented as a calamity, the course of thy great administration of worldly affairs, rightly understood, would have worn a totally different aspect. Might we not be all too easily led to forget our duty to the Most High, were our worldly desires invariably gratified. When we have deemed ourselves most unfortunate, the real evil perhaps was that we were weakly disposed, without just cause, to repine. Teach us, O God, humility and selfdenial, which in themselves do much to give the heart repose. Let all our wishes be so moderate that they may rather be exceeded than disap-Save us from folly, licentiousness, and pointed. extravagance, that, in the day of distress, we may not justly reproach ourselves with being the cause of the evils we lament. Under the pressure of suffering let us not meanly despond, but resolutely strive against the difficulties in our way.

All the splendour that wealth can bestow, must eventually fade when we sink into the tomb. Aware of this, let us evermore aspire to the more important riches which our souls may enjoy in perpetuity. A clear conscience, and the conviction that we are the objects of thy gracious care, surpass in value all the treasures of the world. Grant these. O Lord our God! and enable us cheerfully to do thy will, and to bear with fortitude such visitations as it may be thy pleasure to send. From peril deign to shield us this night. In closing the day we feel that we have taken another step towards eternity. Great Author of all, sustain us through our days and nights, in what remains of our progress, till we gain the abodes of the blessed, where sin and sorrow, sickness and death, will be known no more.

To thee our thoughts, words, and deeds, our passions, inclinations, and cares, we humbly submit. Thee we desire ever to retain in our minds, and, confiding in thy love, to endure every affliction with serenity and perfect resignation. Dispose our hearts to praise thy name, to shun evil, and to despise the vanities of the world. Enlighten our minds: purify our hearts, and in all our doings let us have constantly before us the shortness of time, the immensity of eternity.

### THE DEATH OF A GOOD MAN.

The sufferer, all patient and adoring, submits to the divine will; and by submission, becomes superior to his affliction. He is sensibly touched with the disconsolate state of his attendants, and pierced with an anxious concern for his wife and children. His wife, who will soon be a destitute widow; his children, who will soon be helpless orphans;—" yet, though cast down, not in despair." He is greatly refreshed by his trust in the everlasting covenant, and his hope of approaching glory. Religion gives a dignity to distress. At each interval of ease, he comforts his very comforters; and suffers with all the majesty of woe.

The soul, just going to abandon the tottering clay, collects all her force, and exerts her last efforts. The good man raises himself on his pillow, extends a kind hand to his servants, which is bathed in tears; takes an affecting farewell of his friends; clasps his wife in a feeble embrace; kisses the dear pledges of their mutual love; and then pours all that remains of life and of strength in the following words:—"I die, my dear children; but God, the everlasting God, will be with you. Though you lose an earthly parent, you have a Father in heaven, who lives for evermore. Nothing, nothing but an unbelieving heart, and irreligious life, can separate you from the regards of his providence—from the endearments of his love."

He could proceed no farther. His heart was full; but utterance failed. After a short pause, with difficulty, great difficulty, he added—"You, the dear partner of my soul, you are now the only protector of our orphans—I leave you under a weight of cares;—but God, who defendeth the cause of the widow—God, whose promise is faithfulness and truth—God hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. This

revives my drooping spirits.-Let this support the wife of my bosom. -And now, O Father of compassions, into thy hands I commend my spirit-encouraged by thy promised

goodness, I leave my fatherless"-

Here he fainted; fell back upon the bed; and lay for some minutes, bereft of his senses. As a taper, on the very point of extinction, is sometimes suddenly rekindled and leaps into a quivering flame, so life, before it totally expired, gave a parting struggle, and once more looked abroad from the opening eyelids.—He would fain have spoke—fain have uttered the sentence be began; more than once he essayed, but the organs of speech were become like a broken vessel; and nothing but the obstructing phlegm rattled in his throat. His aspect, however, spoke affection inexpressible. With all the father, all the husband still living in his looks, he takes one more view of those dear children, whom he had often beone more view of those deal children, who has had obtained when held with a parental triumph. He turns his dying eyes on that beloved woman, who he never beheld but with a glow of delight. Fixed in this posture, amidst smiles of love, and under a gleam of heaven, they shine out their last.

Hervey.

### MORNING.—JANUARY 22.

REJOICE IN GOD.

Early, my God, without delay. I haste to seek thy face; My thirsty spirit faints away, Without thy cheering grace.

So pilgrims on the scorching sand, Beneath a burning sky, Long for a cooling stream at hand, And they must drink or die.

I've seen thy glory, and thy power, Through all thy temple shine; My God, repeat that heavenly hour, That vision so divine.

Not all the bleasings of a feast Can please my soul so well. As when thy richer grace I taste, And in thy presence dwell.

Not life itself, with all her joys, Can my best passions move, Or raise so high my cheerful voice, As thy forgiving love.

Thus, till my last expiring day, I'll bless my God and king; Thus will I lift my hands to pray, And tune my lips to sing.

Watte

GOD'S CARE OF MAN. DEUTERONOMY, CHAP. XXXII.

1 Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye

greatness unto our God.

4 He is the rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

- 5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children; they are a perverse and crooked generation.
- 6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee.
- 7 ¶ Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.
- 8 When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the Sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people, according to the numbers of the children of Israel.

9 For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of

his inheritance.

10 He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

12 So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

DEPENDANCE EVER TO BE PLACED ON THE MOST HIGH.

Why are our bosoms so often disturbed, why do we sin against God, and distress ourselves, by entertaining cares and sorrows which a Christian never should experience? It is true we know not what accidents may befal us in the course of this day, but we know that we are the objects of God's paternal care, and therefore, relying on him, our minds ought to be at rest. We know his love, and the tenderness with which he ever treats us, propitiated as he has been by our Redeemer. All the past may justly rise as evidence against us, if we now weakly distrust his bounty and compassion. So to arraign his providence, would provoke all nature to reprove our weakness; every bird, every insect, every atom, would join to hold up such folly to scorn. He whose life is holy, feels satisfied. Many and great benefits are ours. We are spared the pangs of hunger, but happier still, we are freed from the chains of sin and degrading superstition. In the hour of trouble we are consoled by the attentions of sympathising friends, and we have had the happiness to dry the tear on the cheek of sorrow, and to aid our poorer brethren. We ought not then to complain; we have much to make us glad. Benign Parent of all! Eternal Creator! grant that we may not distrust nor dishonour thee by extravagant anxiety. On thee we throw our cares, trusting to thy watchfulness to avert whatever would cause us affliction. Estranged to doubt or fear, as the infant reposing on its mother's knee, to thee we desire to look up with grateful fondness and perfect confidence

O gracious God! before this morning dawned, before we saw the light, nay, before this world itself was called into existence, thou hadst provided for us, and regulated those events connected with our destiny, which this day may witness. What thou mayest decree, we feel assured will be for our lasting good. We then beg to transfer all our anxieties to thee, and hold ourselves prepared to submit to whatever thou mayest ordain with humble resignation. Is it thy good pleasure that happiness should await us this day?-we shall enjoy it with a thankful heart. If sorrow is to be our portion, not our will, but thine, O God, be done! Living in thy communion, so we adhere to thy faith, in life or in death. Thou wilt give what is best for our temporal peace, and everlasting happiness.

In these dispositions which we now feel, which we fain would call ever ours, confirm our hearts, O God! that we may unceasingly rely on thy love, and put our trust in Christ. Let not our firmness yield, when our spirits are depressed, and we sigh in pain from severe disappointment. Shew thy grace to the world, manifest thy power to thy true worshippers, as their unfailing Protector. To us, and to all our suffering brethren, extend thy benevolent care! Help all who turn to thee for succour, and let the troubled heart find in God

a sure refuge!

### THE RULES OF FAITH.

Faith in God's promises may be compared to a bank note: full and felt possession of the blessings promised, is like ready cash. The man who has bank notes to any given value, looks upon himself as possessed of so much money, though, in reality, it is only so much paper. Thus faith is as satisfied, and rests with as great complacency in the promises of Jehovah, as if it had all the blessings of grace and glory in hand. In faith's estimation, God's note is current coin.

Weak faith says, "God can save me, if he will. Strong faith says, God both can and will save me." See Dan. iii. 17.

What can be more feeble than the ivy, the jessamine, or the vine? Yet these, by the assistance of their tendrils, or claspers, rise and are supported, until they sometimes mount as high as the tree or the wall that sustains them. So the weak believer, laying hold on Jesus by the tendril of faith, rises into the fulness of God, defies the invading storm, and

becomes as a fruitful vine upon the wall of a house.

Under the influence of the blessed Spirit, faith produces holiness, and holiness strengthens faith. Faith, like a fruitful parent, is plenteous in all good works; and good works, like dutiful children, confirm and add to the support of faith.

Faith is the eye of the soul, and the Holy Spirit's influence is the light by which it sees.

Toplady.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 22.

GOD'S GREATNESS AND POWER.

Bless God, O my soul. Rejoice in his name; O Lord, let my voice Thy greatness proclaim; Surpassing in honour. Dominion, and might, Thy throne is the heav'n, Thy robe is the light.

The sky we behold. A curtain displayed; The chambers of heaven On waters are laid. The clouds are a chariot Thy glory to bear, On wings thou art wafted, Thou ridest on air.

As rapid as fire, The angels on high Convey thy commands ; Thy ministers fly. The earth on its basis Eternal sustained. Is fixed in the station Thy wisdom ordained.

Dr. Vincent.

### THE DIVINE GOODNESS. PSALM CXXXIX.

1 O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways

4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether,

5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it

7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the

uttermost parts of the sea: 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand

shall hold me. 11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the

night shall be light about me.

12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

### GOD OMNIPRESENT.

Let our souls aspire to the throne of the Most High, shake off the encumbering cares of life which too often chain them to the earth, and

ascend to the heaven of heavens, on the wings of sacred hope!

Our souls shall have a great holiday. Lost in contemplation of the most sublime object that heaven and earth can contain, they shall float on an ocean of delight: they shall think of God alone. To the Almighty Author of their existence they shall aspire: they shall address themselves

to the sublime cause and ruler of all.

Holy, invisible spirit of the universe! Great God, who art only revealed to us through the million of wonders which attest thy power, and the word of thy eternal Son our Redeemer: thou who art glorified by angels and immortal spirits, how, how shall our tongues find, within the limits of human language, words fitted to utter thy When our minds seek to comprehend thy power and infinite glory, our senses, as dazzled with excessive light, faint beneath the task. This vast globe, with all its wonderful varieties, its countless millions, its various lands and thrones, what is it in thy sight but an atom which would not be missed in thy abode, were it to dissolve into nothing. "What, what then," we may exclaim in the language of the Psalmist, "is man, that thou art mindful of him," and what are we among the sons of men, that on our heads thy favouring mercy should descend.

Yet man is thy peculiar care: thou regardest him with compassion, and the proofs of thy Omnipotence are only equalled by those of thy love. Thou art the God of the most humble mortal, as well as the ruler of the highest heaven. Thou art present to the insect whose existence lasts but a day, as to the most remote sun which, unseen by us, has already shone for millions of years with unfailing, unextinguishable glory.

In the omnipotence of God there is so much of wonder and majesty, that it cannot be contemplated but with trembling awe. The Creator the Supreme Lord is at hand. He sees us, he animates, he surrounds, he supports us, as he does at the same instant, the beings which people other

worlds to us unseen.

He is omnipresent, beholding all things, and therefore governing all with wisdom incomprehensible and boundless love. His mercy diffuses happiness. Not only does the seraph of another state of being rejoice in his bounty, but the human race are also permitted to do so, if they forfeit not the proffered boon by their weakness, transgressions, and forgetfulness of the Almighty.

Our hearts shall exult that God is Omnipre-

sent and everywhere; this ought to be to us a source of comfort and rejoicing. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."

"Where can we withdraw from thy spirit, whither fly from thy presence? If we ascend to heaven thou art there: if we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead us, and thy right hand shall hold us. The darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day: for the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." We behold thee when the millions of stars on high pour their light on a sleeping world, confess thee present in the roar of the tempest, in the awful thunder, and the descending deluge. Thy wisdom is conspicuous in the lowest depths of the earth. It establishes springs in the highest mountains, fills the clefts of the rock with various metals;—thy power is everywhere.

The whole earth is sanctified by the omnipresence of the Deity; every mountain and valley become his altar or his temple. By the omnipresence of God, this earth is converted into a place in which the wretched may rejoice, and the desponding gain firmness; in which the sinner only should tremble as a condemned one, as a stranger,

May we, O God, never be strangers to thee. O grant, in thy mercy, that we may constantly remain the children of thy love. If not banished from thy grace, what can we fear on earth—what hereafter: what can separate us from thee, great Omnipotent Father? Sin, sin only, which cannot

remain in thy glorious presence.

Thou art our God. Thou wilt remain with us in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in death, in the tomb and through all eternity. By thy power the immensity of space is compassed, and ages are but as moments in thy sight. How sublime! how gladdening is the thought of thy Omnipotence. O may it incessantly be present to our souls, that, convinced we are ever in thy sight, we may so govern ourselves as to please thee, and ever walk before thee in righteousness and truth!

### GOD NEAR HIS SUFFERING PEOPLE.

If the God of love is ever peculiarly near to his people for good, it is when his arrows stick fast in them, and when his hand presseth them sore. Behold, God is in this place, and I knew it not; was the retrospective experience of Jacob. While the spiritual winter lasts, be it thy endeavour to exercise, what a late excellent person terms, "The winter graces of faith and patience." At the time appointed, thy consola-tions shall return, as the clear shining after rain; and thy joy be as the sun, when it goeth forth in its might. Then will be realized that elegant and reviving delineation of inward

summer and prosperity of soul: the winter of doubts and darkness, of pain and sorrow, of affliction and temptation, of coldness and barrenness, of storm and tossing is past: the rain of weeping and distress is over and gone. The flowers of peace and holy rejoicing appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds, when thy graces shall be all alert and lively, and thou shall pray and praise with enlargement, is come: and the voice of the turtle, the still, small music of the Holy Spirit's voice, whispering peace to the conscience, is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, fruitfulness in every good word and work shall evidence thy revival in grace; and the vines, with the tender grapes, impart their fragrancy: thy amiable and benevolent tempers, accompanied by all the other lovely effects of communion with God, shall justify thy faith to the world, and visibly adorn thy profession of the gospel of Christ. Cantic. ii. 11, 12, 13.

Yet, though favoured with this happy and glorious experience, you must not expect (at least, it is not the lot of every believer) to enjoy summer all the year round. But, however this be, an eternity is coming, when thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself : for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning

shall be ended. Isaiah lx. 20.

Toplady.

### MORNING.—JANUARY

DIVINE COMFORT.

Lord, how divine thy comforts are! How heavenly is the place, Where Jesus spreads the sacred feast Of his redeeming grace!

There the rich bounties of our God, And heavenly glories shine; There Jesus saith that "I am his, And my Beloved's mine."

What shall we pay our heavenly King, For grace so vast as this? He brings our pardon to our eyes, And seals it with a kiss.

Bretheren's Collection.

GOD TO BE PRAISED FOR HIS GOODNESS. PSALM CXXXVIII.

1 I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth; for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strength-

enedst me with strength in my soul. 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD,

when they hear the words of thy mouth. 5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the LORD.

6 Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

GOD'S CLAIM TO MAN'S PRAISE.

Truly is the Lord, our gracious God, entitled to all praise and gratitude! Glory to his holy name for ever! His goodness shall be the theme of our exulting songs while we draw breath. He has accomplished great things for us. Be it ours to celebrate his goodness, wisdom, and omnipotence. Let all join to praise the Sovereign of the

universe, the mighty Arbiter of all.

Praise, never-ending praise be thine, O God! for giving us souls to know thee, which have been ennobled by thy bounty, and, by the goodness of our Saviour, purified and redeemed. It is our privilege to love thee, and to admire the beauty of thy works. We feel that our souls are destined for immortality: then how justly ought we to deem ourselves favoured! For blessings like these we desire to praise thee, O God!

We praise thee for the goodly form and symmetry which thou hast given to us, for the strength we feel, for the clearness of our perceptions, and the joys of life which we are permitted to share, for our ability to adore thy holy name, we desire

to praise thee, O God!

For all the proofs of thy goodness which we have known, from the commencement of our existence up to the present hour, we offer our thanks. Great has been thy bounty! To thy indulgence we feel largely indebted for many a happy hour, for many a day of comfort, and many a night of calm repose; and for all, we desire to praise thee, O God!

Praise be ever thine, for threatening dangers which thou hast averted,—for thy merciful protection, without which we could not have escaped destruction. We feel that guardian angels have watched over us, have been our companions. For the friends thou hast given, and the intercourse we have been permitted to hold with them, for these, and for all the amenities and comforts of life, placed within our reach, we desire to praise thee, O God!

For the very troubles which thou hast caused us to know, which have rendered us wiser and humbler, for the strength thou hast given us to bear, and the opportunity eventually afforded of escaping from them, we desire to praise thee, O God!

We praise thee for all that we have known of good, for every ray of sunshine that has brightened our path, for every flower that has blossomed in it, for every nourishment afforded to us, for every

delight we have experienced, we desire to praise thee. O God!

For the blessed hope of eternal life, for the knowledge given to us of thy will, and of the path which leads to heaven, we desire to praise thee, O God!

Praised be thy name for the condescension which does not disdain to attend to the prayers of thy creatures. Praised be thy Son, our Redeemer. for that gracious intercession which has rendered our petitions acceptable to thee! But where can we with reason stop, and say praise should be continued no farther? We cannot number, we cannot utter, all the manifestations we have witnessed of thy divine love and paternal care; but while life continues, we will employ ourselves in singing thy praise, and in eternity continue the strain. Prizing thy grace above all things else, we will attune our hearts to gratitude for every blessing, even for the least which may be added to those already received, and with all humility confess our own unworthiness. So feeling here, we trust in thy goodness to partake of everlasting happiness in the world to come.

### GOD SUSTAINS THE AGED.

All the children of faithful Abraham, treading in the steps of his faith, have the same God to deal with, who keepeth promise for ever. It is recorded of Isaac, the heir of the same promise with his father, that he died in the same faith, an old man. He was tried with many infirmities; but we read of no complaints, though he was an hundred and eighty years of age. He expired in praise and thankfulness, satisfied with Jacob, an hundred and forty-seven years old, when he was dying, declared that he had waited for the salvation of God. Waiting faith is strong faith: and after he had blessed his children, and had given commandment concerning his bones, he quietly, as if he had been going to sleep, gathered up his feet into the bed, and died in peace, an old man, and satisfied. All these lived in the world, strangers and pilgrims, looking for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God: and they were not disappointed of their hope; they all died in faith-in an act of faith, and were gathered to their people, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn. When they came to the end of their faith, they came to heaven. The moment they entered the city which God had prepared for them: and their bodies, sleeping in the dust, are in the covenant of life, and shall be raised and glorified in the morning of the resurrection.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 23.

### LONGING AFTER GOD.

Great God, indulge my humble claim, Thou art my hope, my joy, my rest; The glories that compose thy name, Stand all engaged to make me blest. With heart and eyes, and lifted hands, For thee I long, to thee I look, As travellers in thirsty lands
Pant for the cooling water-brook.

Not fruits nor wines that tempt our taste, Nor all the joys our senses know, Could make me so divinely blest, Or raise my cheerful passion so.

My life itself, without thy love, No taste of pleasure could afford; 'Twould but a tiresome burden prove, If I were banished from the Lord.

Amidst the wakeful hours of night, When busy cares afflict my head, One thought of thee gives new delight, And adds refreshment to my bed.

Watts.

### THE PERSECUTIONS OF SAUL. ACTS IX.

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the LORD, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

### WHAT IS ETERNITY?

What, what art thou, eternity? To our feeble minds thou presentest a fathomless abyss. That in the ordinary acceptation of the word, is eternal, which has no limit to its duration, which evermore continues and can know no end. The thought is astounding, that we are created for eternity! How awful is the reflection which comes over us when death, resurrection, heaven and hell, all present themselves to our mind bound up in eternity. "The smoke from their torment will rise from eternity to eternity—their morn will never die their fire will not be extinguished;" when such solemn announcements meet the eye, Spirit of God! teach. O teach us what we ought to think! Must we not conclude from these that there is a miserable state of being after this life has closed, into which the impious will be plunged by their evil doings, where their sufferings are never to end? Were the period only a century, to be so long alienated from our gracious Creator, and in a state of ceaseless anxiety, grief, and despair; such a sentence would be dreadful. But Eternity! -Eternity, how terrible! Can we think of this, however we abhor sin, without feeling compassion for those who have to meet such a doom. But if

this thought is dismal, how grateful the balsam supplied by the reflection that the just are to know a blissful life which will last for ever! This is provided for them by the grace of God. Taking such a view is as delightfully cheering, as thinking of the other is mournfully appalling. Let us ask our hearts, which condition, when we are called hence, must be ours? Where will our final habitation be found? Will eternal misery or neverending felicity be our lot in the world to come?

Thou, O God! art unchangeably great. Ages roll away and thou remainest the same, but our existence passes like a shadow in the sun. The beautiful order of thy creation is manifest in every portion of it, and all seems to progress towards perfection. Shall men prove an exception to the rule? Shall the sum total of our consciousness be comprehended by eating and drinking for a few years, and the alternations of labour and rest, of sleeping and waking, and these proved, must we finish for ever? It cannot be. The moving spirit within us, which nothing earthly can fully satisfy, negatives such an idea. Our mortal frames may speedily be dissolved, but our souls defy death, and will still survive. Of this we are assured by the feelings of our nature, as well as by the light of revelation. The grave, then, shall not be to us a source of alarm. He who first bestowed consciousness upon us, can wake us from death, and bid us live through eternity. He can emancipate our souls from a corrupted body to give us an incorruptible one. In thee, O Lord, we repose all our confidence, and resigning our breath, feel we sink into the embrace of a parent's love.

Animated by this hope, it should be our constant endeavour to prepare ourselves for the glorious change by a course of benevolence and rectitude, of devout gratitude and humble prayer. Not a day should pass unmarked by such exercise of our powers. As the ever moving ocean confounds wave with wave in its course, so will the few days of our mortal career, soon be lost in the bosom of eternity. We have lived to see the close of another day. It is gone, and all we shall be permitted to number, must follow with like rapidity. Father of all, in mercy deign to grant, that here we may know a tranquil happy end, and be awakened by thy call to a more blessed life. In that delicious hope we this night compose ourselves to sleep-and thou, on our awakening, and thy goodness, shall be the subject of our earliest musings. Thine, while we breathe, we desire to remain. In this fond hope, there is consolation and joy, peace on earth and a blessed anticipation of immortal happiness.

MAN'S PRESENT AND FUTURE STATE.

When a rational mind is awakened to see the emptiness of all creatures, and their insufficiency to make him happy, and finds nothing but the eternal love of God capable to make a creature truly blessed; how miserably must that soul be tormented, that knows not whether God will love him or no, nor how this love may be attained; nor, when once attained, how long this love will continue! But he finds an answer to all these painful questions in the gospel of Christ: For the Father loves the Son infinitely, and loves all those that believe on him, for his sake; they are for ever accepted in him who is first and for ever accepted, and they are beloved in him who is first and for ever beloved.

The happiness of eternal life consists in the pleasure that arises from the regular operation of all our powers and passions. This was a great part of the happiness of the innocent man; his reason was the guide to all his meaner faculties, and his appetites and his affections in a sweet harmony followed the conduct of his reason: And as his understanding and judgment put forth their regular dictates, so the meaner powers paid a constant obedience, and pursued their proper objects. There was no irregular anger to set his blood on fire; no intemperate and corrupt wishes to vitiate his nature, to pollute his pleasures, and disturb his peace; none of those tumults and hurricanes in his soul, which we so often feel in our fallen state, and lament them much oftener than we can suppress them. And as the fancy and appetites of innocent Adam submitted to his reason, so, doubtless, if his Maker were pleased to reveal any sublimer truth to him, which his reason could not comprehend, then reason itself submitted to that revelation, believed the word of a speaking God, and resigned the throne to faith. His natural powers had no uneasy contest, there was no civil war nor rebellion amongst them to interrupt his happiness.

And thus shall it be again, but in a more glorious manner, when we are raised from all the ruins of our fallen state, and eternal life is made complete in heaven.

Watts.

### MORNING.—JANUARY 24.

VANITY OF MAN.

Teach me the measure of my days, Thou Maker of my frame; I would survey life's narrow space, And learn how frail I am.

A span is all that we can boast,
An inch or two of time:
Man is but vanity and dust
In all his flower and prime.

See the vain race of mortals move
Like shadows o'er the plain,
They rage and strive, desire and love,
But all the noise is vain.

Some walk in honour's gaudy show, Some dig for golden ore, They toil for heirs they know not who And strait are seen no more. What should I wish to wait for then From creatures, earth, and dust? They make our expectations vain, And disappoint our trust.

Now I forbid my carnal hope, My fond desires recall; I give my mortal interest up, And make my God my all.

Watts.

### HOW TO USE GOD'S GIFTS, PROV. XI.

23 The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

24 There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is

that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

27 He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but

he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the right-

eous shall flourish as a branch.
29 He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind:

and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that

winneth souls is wise.

31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth:
much more the wicked and the sinner.

### IMPROVE THE PRESENT HOUR.

Since it has been the pleasure of our gracious creator, that we should live to hail another morning, it ought to be our object so to employ the new day, that it may tend to fit us for eternity. Even the present moment, which has almost irrevocably fled before we had duly appreciated its value, we shall have to account for hereafter, to the great Judge of all the world. How awful is this thought when we review our past trials. How sternly rise against us the hours, days, months, and years, which we have negligently thrown away. Be gracious to us, O God! Enter not into judgment with thy creatures. Of our years even, we cannot give thee a just account: how then can we speak to the manner in which our hours and days have been employed? Mute and abashed must we stand when the reckoning for the past is demanded. But how uncertain is time! It is in thy hands, Mighty Being! thou hast but to command, and this frame, now so full of life and perception, will be motionless and insensible for ever. At thy nod, this existence must termimate, and we sink into the tomb. Oh! yet a moment stay; grant us a further space for repentance! Still prolong our days that we may have an opportunity of duly meditating on the

past, and profit from the present to sustain us in the future—in the hour of death.

Our prayer is heard. The Lord has mercifully granted us another day. Ere it is too late, let us estimate its importance. Soon will this day, like vesterday, like all the days which form the period embraced by our several existences, be fled. Such all those which we may yet live to see, must prove. While indulging in the prospect of mortal enjoyment, our last hour may unexpectedly sound, and we find ourselves snatched in a moment from the gaiety of friends, and from exultation in worldly prosperity, to pass to the gloomy solitude of the tomb. The Eternal Creator may at once exercise his right to call us to our account. O that this conviction, as it is at the passing moment, may be present to our minds through the day. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto true wisdom." Of what importance will be ten, twenty, thirty, or forty years conceded to us, if these are suffered to pass away in sinful pleasure, or in forming foolish and impracticable designs. A minute wisely occupied, an hour given to thy glory, a day spent in doing good and attuning our hearts to piety, will be of infinitely more avail, and may prove the source of never ending bliss. O! may we for the time to come, be able to look back without shame or regret on the days which are fled. Terrible will be the retrospect, should we weakly, madly, continue to add to the number which have been lost. May this be deeply impressed on our minds. Listen to this, our prayer, O God. May the mercy which enables us to form the resolution, supply the energy requisite to carry it out. Our supplications to that end are offered to thee, our father. Without thy accorded grace, we are incapable of fulfilling our best wishes! O let it not be withheld. Our hours are at thy disposal; and the wisdom which will improve time with a view to eternity, comes from thee alone. In thy boundless compassion, let it not be denied to our prayers.

### ALL GOOD COMES FROM GOD.

If you be moral, and honest, and friendly, and generous, and patriotic, whose are the dispositions which you exercise—whose, the powers, to which, you give culture, and scope? And if you use, only, God's gifts, can that be meritorious? You may say, "yes—it is meritorious, to use them aright, whilst others, abuse them." But it is wickedness to abuse Then, it can, only, be duty to use aright; and duty will be merit, when debt, is donation. You may bestow a fortune in charity, but, the wealth, is, already, the Lord's. You may cultivate the virtues, which adorn, and sweeten human life; but, the employed powers, are the Lord's. You may give



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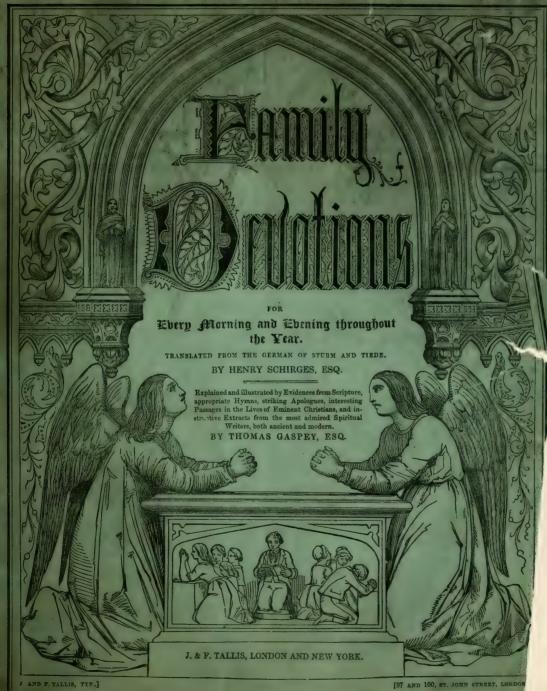
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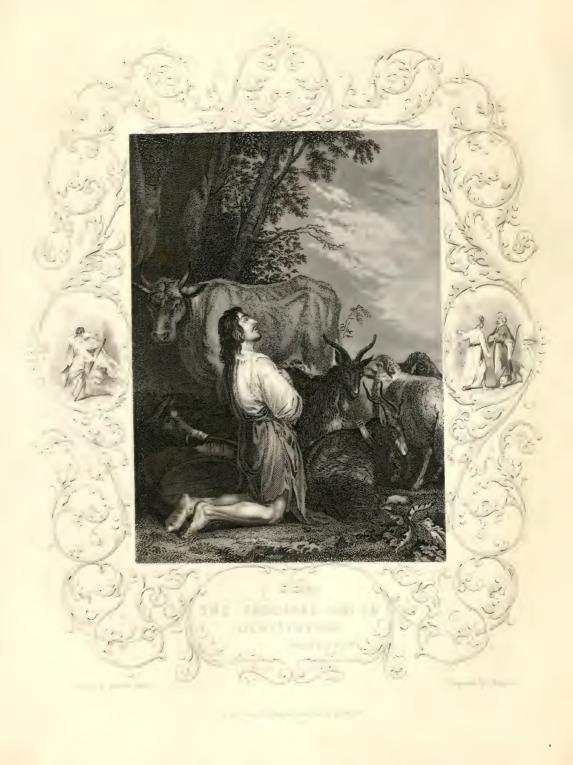
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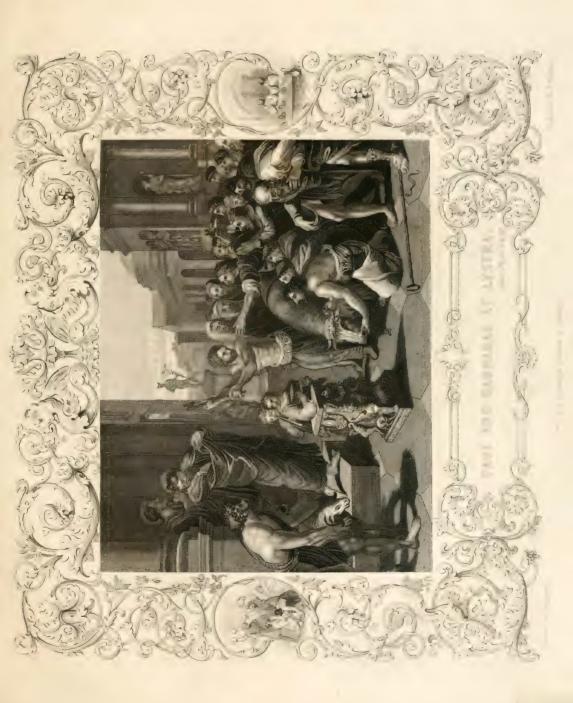
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time and strength to the enterprises of philanthropy; each moment is the Lord's, each sinew is the Lord's. You may be upright in every dealing of trade, scrupulously honourable in all the intercourses of life; but, "a just weight and balance, are the Lord's, all the weights of the bag are His work." And where, then, is the merit of works? Oh, throw into one heap each power of the mind, each energy of the body; use, in God's service, cach grain of your substance, each second of your time; give to the Almighty, every throb of the pulse, every drawing of the breath; labour and strive, and be instant in season and out of season: and let the steepness of the mountain, daunt you not, and the swellings of the ocean, deter you not, and the ruggedness of the desert, appal you not; -but on! still on, in toiling for your Maker! and dream, and talk, and boast of merit, when you can find that particle in the heap, or, that shred in the exploit, which you may exclude from the confession,-" All things come of Thee, and of Thine own, O God have I given thee.'

Rev. Henry Melville.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 24.

### DEATH NOT AN EVIL.

Are friends well beloved called away? While sadly we look on their grave. Let the mourner, consoled, learn to say, God only has called them to save. He perhaps knew, if here they remained, Much woe they would have to deplore; And Christ their redemption obtained-To happiness opened the door.

To happiness. Yes; for the soul Might here have been tempted to roam, Unable the flesh to control. It now is in peace and at home. It rests where the wicked must cease From troubling, as here they would do; From pain it has gained a release, From fear and uncertainty too.

Then hence be the sorrowful thought, And the tear which continues to fall, Since faith the blest lesson has taught, To die is no evil at all. If sad we have found it to part, Again we the dear ones shall find: Oh! then, let the satisfied heart To the will of our God be resigned!

PRAISE GOD FOR DELIVERANCE. PSALM LXXIII.

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none

upon earth that I desire beside thee.

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

### PSALM LXXX.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.

18 So will we not go back from thee: quicken us, and we

will call upon thy name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

### PSALM LXXXVI.

11 Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

12 I will praise thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart:

and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

### VICTORY THROUGH JESUS.

Thy works, all praise thee; all thy angels, praise; Thy saints, adore, and on thy altars burn The fragrant incense, of perpetual love : They praise thee, now; their hearts, their voices, praise, And swell the rapture of the glorious song. Harp! lift thy voice on high! shout, angels, shout! And loudest ye redeemed! glory to God, And to the Lamb, who bought us with his blood, From every kindred, nation, people, tongue, And washed, and sanctified our souls: And gave us robes of linen pure, and crowns Of life, and made us kings, and priests to God! Shout back to ancient Time! Sing loud, and wave Your palms of triumph! Sing, Where is thy sting? O, death! Where is thy victory? O, grave! Thanks be to God, eternal thanks, who gave Us victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Harp, lift thy voice on high! shout, angels, shout, And loudest ye redeemed! Glory to God, And to the Lamb, -all glory and all praise! All glory and all praise, at morn, and even, That come, and go, eternally, and find Us happy, still, and thee, for ever, blest. Glory to God, and to the Lamb. Amen. For ever, and for evermore. Amen.

Poll k.

### DEATH NOT TO BE DREADED.

"But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." It was in these words that Jesus Christ took leave of his beloved followers, the apostles: it was by holding out this hope, that he sought to cheer their spirits, when on the point of separating from them. These words, for us, and for all Christians, are replete with the sublimest consolation, when those melancholy changes are taking place, which, in our progress through life, we often have to deplore.

Mortality is the lot of man, by God's decree. Nothing is more natural, nothing more common, than separation; yet not less natural is it for us to mourn, when those we love are taken from us by the hand of death. Those tears are amiable which we shed for friends who have sunk into the tomb. Where is the heart that would not feel deeply affected at the woe of the son, the daughter, or the family, who sees its chief support called by a mysterious providence suddenly away. How sad is the condition of the orphan!—how mourn-

ful the solitude of the widow! But we should set some limits to our grief; our hearts ought not to sink in infidel distress: we are Christians, and even in the tempest of our sorrow, ought still to

cherish hope.

All must die. It is the will of the great Giver of life, that the way of death, which so many have travelled, shall be travelled by us also. Those who have preceded us, have surmounted an evil which we have yet to overcome. We are now what they were; what they are we must shortly be. And ought we, would we, were it permitted by the Eternal, recal the dead from that happy state which they have reached, to make them again sojourn in this world of sorrow? We may have used every means, while they were here, to prolong their existence, and restore them to health, but since God has called away those whom we would have gladly have kept with us, we have only to submit to his wise decree, in the perfect assurance that what our eternal Father has done. is well done. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Excessive grief, while it unfitted us for attending to our proper avocations, would render our lives wretched, but could never recal the objects of our They may not return to us, but we shall go to them. That they were mortal we always knew, and that, moderating our attachment, should have caused the bereavement to be less severely felt. If our love were founded, not on merely personal attractions, but on piety and truth, like those qualities, it will prove unearthly and immortal. With this impressed upon our minds, we feel that we have not lost them, that only their mortal, fleshy garment has been consigned to the grave, while the spirit survives in immortal health. That which we prized could The fondly-cherished not be buried in the earth. image of the departed, and the happy hours passed with them in innocent mirth, will be often recalled, and, contemplating their virtues, we shall still feel connected with them, till at length we have the felicity of rejoining them in another world.

We are not separated eternally. What consolation is there in that thought! They seem to invite us to share with them the society of angels. while they softly whisper we shall soon meet again. We have not to mourn that they are lost, but simply that from us their endearing smiles are withdrawn for a time. For that loss, heavy as it is, in the end, we shall be indemnified. In another, happier state of being, we shall rejoice in a blessed

re-union, with all who have walked in the paths of virtue, and all the wise and good of former ages. What bliss will it be so to meet, with the delicious thought that we shall part no more!

Immortal Lord! Fountain of all goodness! that fate which calls us from this world, serves but to draw us nearer to thee. We see many fall around us, and while these cause our thoughts to dwell on our own departure from life, let each death which passes before our eyes, give us a new lesson of wisdom. Our companions, one after another, sink into the grave, and our turn to follow them may be nearer at hand than we at this moment can be aware. Be merciful to us, O Lord! mitigate the pangs of death to the dying, and sustain our spirits in the last awful hour. The wound which thou givest, it is thine to make whole again; if thou biddest us to die, at thy voice we shall rise to life again. Be graciously pleased to cheer all the weeping children of affliction, with the thought that it will be theirs again to meet with those whom they have lost, and to share with them the joys of heaven. Should doubts arise in our minds respecting the present condition of those who are no more on earth; let them be removed by a just confidence in thy bounty, and in thy might, which will not fail eventually to change all misery into undying happiness. While such are our convictions, O God! let it be our great aim to prepare for our departure hence, by a blameless life; that as Christians we may live, believe, and suffer, and as such die, consoled and happy, in the hope of a blessed resurrection.

### MORNING.—JANUARY 25.

HOPE IN GOD PREFERABLE TO WORLDLY ENJOYMENT.

Father, whate'er of earthly bliss Thy sovereign will denies, Accepted at thy throne of grace, Let this petition rise:

"Give me a calm, a thankful heart, From every murmur free; The blessings of thy grace impart, And make me live to thee :

Let the sweet hope that thou art mine, My life and death attend; Thy presence thro' my journey shine, And crown my journey's end." Rippon's Collection.

HOLINESS REWARDED, II. SAM. XXII.

14 The LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

17 He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters;

18 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me; for they were too strong for me.

19 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the

LORD was my stay.
20 He brought me forth also into a large place: he deliver-

ed me, because he delighted in me.
21 The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness:
according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed

22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his judgments were before me: and as for his

statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore the Lond hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye-sight.

26 With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, and

with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

### HOLINESS ALL-SUFFICIENT.

No happiness so great, so pure, can be realized by man below, that is to be compared with the blessed consciousness that we have ever, to the best of our ability, led a life acceptable to God. If, through his mercy, we have been able to gain a humble, pious, and satisfied heart, then may we rationally rejoice. Let others contend for worldly distinctions: we are sufficiently ennobled if we feel that we have become the object of our Maker's favour, and possess the inward assurance that we have been redeemed by Jesus Christ. Let avarice crave wealth, it is sufficient for us. O Heavenly Father, that thou art pleased to prolong our lives. The scholar may claim greater erudition; we feel that we have sufficient learning, if we know how to live as becomes God's people, and die happily. The multitude may sigh for titles and honours which kings can bestow, we claim no higher distinction, we can conceive no greater honour, than to have a right to be called Christians.

What has prevented us from acting on these feelings till now? What power, what temptation could make us content to forget the glories of Christianity, that we might woo the vanities of life? Thou knowest, Lord, how often has the weak corrupted heart, resolved that the false pleasures of sin should no more allure from the path that leads to salvation: and yet, when the meanest temptation invites, we have again listened to the deceiver's voice. Our firmest determination to be faithful to duty, has vanished in a moment. The aid of the good spirit from above, we now sincerely feel is essential to our well being. The

influence of thy grace we implore. To thee we raise our voices, and pray that thou wilt be pleased to grant us a holy and humble heart to seek thy wisdom, exult in thy forbearance, and rest its every hope on our great Redeemer. The example of meekness, perseverance and courage, which he has set for the instruction of mankind, it shall be our ambition to imitate.

While our thoughts dwell on the cross, it exalts us into sages, and elevates us as Christians. In Jesus we see all that could exalt truth, exemplify wisdom, and dignify suffering. May the image of what he suffered to save us from the consequence of our own evil doings, still be present to our thoughts, that our hearts may never wander! O thou, who in thy compassion enduredst so much for us, subdue every refractory disposition that may be found in our souls. Let thy love and support strengthen us in the contest against sin: and grant that by faith in thee, we may triumph over the world and all its wickedness.

So encouraged, we trust this day our conduct will not offend or dishonour our Creator. May it be seen in us how much true Christianity can accomplish, where the believer exults in the favour of the Deity. Shew in us, O Saviour of Man, thy goodness to those who put their trust in thee. Lead us to that consummation to which our noblest hopes aspire, and for all below, dispose what concerns us as thy wisdom shall see fit. Be thy dispensations what they may, looking up to thee as our guardian and supporter: we trust thy powerful arm will rescue us from evil eventually, and of this secure, we can serenely prepare to meet every danger.

THE PLEASURES OF LIFE COMPARED WITH THOSE OF BELIGION.

The pleasure belonging to religion never satiates or wearies; for it properly affects the spirit, and a spirit feels no weariness, as being privileged from the causes of it. But can the epicure say so of any of the pleasures that he so much dotes upon? Do they not expire while they satisfy? and after a few minutes' refreshment, determine in loathing and unquietness? How short is the interval between a pleasure and a burden! how indiscernible the transition from one to the other! Pleasure dwells no longer upon the appetite than the necessities of nature, which are quickly and easily provided for; and then all that follows is a load and an oppression. Every morsel to a satisfied hunger is only a new labour to a tired digestion. Every draught to him that has quenched his thirst, is but a further quenching of nature, and a provision for rheum and diseases; a drowning of the quickness and activity of the spirits.

He that prolongs his meals and sacrifices his time as well as his other conveniences to his luxury, how quickly does he outsit his pleasure! and then how is all the following time bestowed upon ceremony and surfeit! till at length, after a long fatigue of eating, and drinking, and babbling, he concludes the great work of dining genteelly, and so makes a shift to rise from the table that he may lie down upon his bed; where, after he has slept himself into some use of himself, by much ado he staggers to his table again, and there acts over the same brutish scene: so that he passes his whole life in a dosed condition between sleeping and waking.

Dr. South.

### EVENING.-JANUARY 25.

GOD SPEAKING PEACE TO HIS PEOPLE.

Unite, my roving thoughts! unite In silence soft and sweet: And thou, my soul, sit gently down At thy great Sovereign's feet. Jehovah's awful voice is heard, Yet gladly I attend: For lo, the everlasting God Proclaims himself my friend. Harmonious accents to my soul The sounds of peace convey; The tempest at his word subsides, And winds and seas obey. By all its joys, I charge my heart To grieve his love no more; But, charmed by melody divine, To give its follies o'er.

Dr. Doddridge.

### THE RIGHTEOUS SAVED. ISAIAH XXVI.

1 In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keep-

eth the truth may enter in.

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed

on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHO-

VAH is everlasting strength:

7 The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee: the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to

the remembrance of thee.

9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

### PERFECTION TO BE AIMED AT ON EARTH.

"If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." It has often happened to many, that at the commencement of a new year, they have resolved to change their course of life and become new men. They perhaps were in earnest, and for days and weeks renewed their virtuous resolutions, and

even acted upon them. They endeavoured, by a proper and serious deportment, to obtain peace of mind, but by degrees their zeal fell off, their pious resolves were forgotten, and they relapsed into their former state.

Many have been seriously bent on ennobling their hearts, who, in the hour of silent meditation, have felt justly alarmed at their wanderings, and at the depravity detected in their minds, who still made little progress in the way of Christian reformation. Benevolent in retirement, when entered on their daily vocations, and mixed up with other men, they become as sordid and as worldly-minded

as their neighbours.

Have we not experienced this in our own bosoms? Have we not found ourselves very different beings engaged in the ordinary care of life from what we had been in moments of solitude and self-exami-Let us, for a moment, contemplate a congregation of our fellow creatures in the temple of our God. What decorum, what solemnity, what peace of mind seems to prevail! Could it be supposed that those who there assembled in devout humility, would be animated with fierce hostility towards each other, when they had left the sacred place; that they, now so lowly before the Omnipotent, should, in the space of a few hours, be prepared to domineer over their poorer fellowcreatures with harshness and contempt. this has been witnessed, and tongues that joined in hymning the praises of the Lord of all, a few moments afterwards have been exerted to promulgate malignant calumny, insidious flattery, or wanton falsehood. In the house of God all appear holy, who, in the world, become all pollution. How mournful is the contrast!

When it was the pleasure of the Almighty to call man into existence, he declared, "It is not good that man should be alone." He also declared, "In the sweat of his face shall he eat his bread." It was not the aim of his divine Son, when he assumed mortality, to alter the established constitution of the world. We are born for each other, and we live for each other, and our powers are wonderfully varied, to the end that we may serve each other. Jesus and his disciples did not withdraw from the world, to live in a desert, but they proclaimed in the world the kingdom of God, and laboured unceasingly to extend the sphere of their operations. They judge erroneously who think that a high degree of perfection cannot be reached in this life. Wise resolutions have often been formed, but never carried into execution from the feeble and capricious nature of man, but this is not impossible.

It is for us to remember that God has called us to holiness, and Jesus has said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." The yoke of our Redeemer is easy, and his burden light. Ought we then to despair of becoming ultimately perfect, if we have but constancy to persevere in those resolutions, which the goodness of the Almighty enables us to form. Though we may sometimes deviate from the right path, have we not a compassionate Saviour ready to reclaim us, and sustain the fainting heart? The best may err, but when they fall they rise again. Truly penitent, they know no joy like that of atoning for their transgressions by acts of love towards their fellows, and humbling themselves before God. To them the work of expiation is a pleasure, as it is a duty.

Great and Holy Spirit, enlighten the hearts of those who now desire to raise their thoughts to thee. Grant that we may ever feel and act as true Christians ought, and further grant that, successfully struggling through the toils and cares of this mortal existence, we may at length reach that blessed goal, where every apprehension must be set at rest, where suffering will cease, and we be permitted to behold that perfection, which it ought to be evermore our object to gain while we remain on

earth.

### REPENTANCE LEADS TO HOLINESS.

Let us not flatter ourselves, the God we adore can never renounce his holiness. The love of good, and hatred of evil, are as natural and essential as his omnipotence and infinity. Yet must God renounce his holiness if he receive us into his favour without our renouncing sin. He would have communion with sin if he had communion with impenitent sinners. It is then as impossible to unite ourselves to God without repentance, as it is to unite life and death, light and darkness; as impossible as for God to deny himself, or to cease to be. Neither let us flatter ourselves about the quality of this repentance, for it is not a cold and careless repentance, it is not that, which consists in words only, it is not that, which passes lightly through the mind, and which hardly touches the heart. God requires a penitence, which pervades all the powers of the soul, which penetrates to the bottom of them all, which produces sighs, tears, and regrets, which is accompanied with a lively grief, a bitter sadness, not only for having exposed ourselves to punishment, but also for having offended the Lord, and so drawn down upon ourselves his just indignation. In one word, an habitual and powerful repentance, which breaks the mind and rends the heart, keeps us a long time in that state, and empowers us sincerely to return to righteousness and holiness.

To incline you more effectually to this repentance, let us, I beseech you, lift up our eyes to the mercy of God, and to the blood of the covenant, which Jesus Christ hath shed for us. Let us not imagine, while we feel remorse for sin, that there

is no balm in Gilead, no consolation in God: doubtless there is, and were we such as we ought, we might come with boldness to the throne of grace, and be assured of obtaining mercy and of finding grace to help in time of need.

Claude.

### MORNING.-JANUARY 26.

### DELIGHT IN GOD.

O Lord! I would delight in thee, And on thy care depend; To thee in every trouble flee, My best, my only friend.

When all created streams are dried, Thy fulness is the same; May I with this be satisfied, And glory in thy name!

Why should the soul a drop bemean, Who has a fountain near; A fountain which will ever run

A fountain which will ever run With waters sweet and clear?

No good in creatures can be found But may be found in thee; I must have all things, and abound, While God is God to me.

Oh, that I had a stronger faith,
To look within the veil;
To credit what my Saviour saith,
Whose word can never fail!

He, that has made my heaven secure,
Will here all good provide:
While Christ is rich, can I be poor;
What can I want beside?

O Lord! I cast my care on thee; I triumph and adore: Henceforth my great concern shall be To love and please thee more.

Ryland.

### RELIANCE ON THE DEITY. PSALM LVI.

4 In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

10 In God will I praise his word: in the Lord will I praise his word.

11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee.

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

### TO ACKNOWDEDGE GOD'S GOODNESS WITH SUB-MISSION TO HIS WILL.

Oh let our souls praise the Lord, and never forget what our God has done for us! We humbly offer thee our gratitude for all the blessings we have known in the course of our lives, and for thy goodness in preserving us through the night from which we now awake, from all alarm, from

disease and death. That we still survive we owe to thy bounty. Would that our hearts could assure us that we are worthy of thy daily care. Our sins have merited severe chastisement, yet thy patience has not been exhausted. For ingratitude and negligence we deserve thy frown, but, from this day forward, we promise thee, we promise ourselves, to be more grateful, attentive, and obedient.

Enable us, by thy mercy, Almighty Father, to keep the resolution we have formed. Let us feel that thou art ever present: then shall we walk before thee in holy fear, and lead a blameless life, and be so strengthened by thy grace, that when that life terminates, we may appear without trembling, nay, with joyous hope, before the mighty judge of all mankind.

If we continue thus devoutly inclined, thy blessing will rest upon us. This we pray for the passing day. Guide us so that our time may be spent in a manner that will in some measure tend to thy glory, and the benefit of our fellow-creatures. Grant that we may improve ourselves, and bless us with that which is essential to our well-being. Spare us affliction beyond our power to bear; and that portion of sorrow which must be ours, grant us fortitude to sustain, with calm submission to thy righteous decree.

Thy continued indulgence, ought to inspire, in us, the most wakeful eagerness properly to dispense thy bounty. This neglected, great in the sequel must be our penitence and shame. By the faith we possess, we implore thy compassion for all our fellow-christians. Like us, they have been called into existence by thy all-creating hand. View with thy mercy, O Lord, those who till now have neglected thy ways: and let them with us exult in redemption by the sufferings of a Saviour. Be not deaf to the cries of the unhappy, but relieve the sufferers from the pressure of that calamity which they may have to deplore. For our friends, make this a joyful and propitious day. Let thy grace be felt throughout the world, and let all share it according to their real wants. Be a good shepherd to those who have wandered from the fold, be a teacher to the ignorant, a monitor to the sinner, a champion to the oppressed, a physician to the sick, and a consoling father to the dying. This, we have abundant reason for confessing, thou hast ever been. Such, without our prayers, thou wouldst continue. All thy creatures share thy bounty, to all thy goodness extends.

### CHRISTIAN ADVANTAGES.

If a true and perfect Christian hath no care to distract him, having discharged all his concerns on God's providence; if he hath no fear to dismay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and mischief; if he hath no despair to sink him, having a sure refuge in the divine mercy and help; if he hath no superstitious terrors or scruples to perplex him, being conscious of his own upright intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful willingness to accept his sincere endeavours; if he hath no incurable remorse to torment him, the stings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance; if he hath no longing desires to disquiet him, being fully satisfied with that he doth possess, or may expect from God's bounty, all other things being far beneath his ambition or coveting; if he hath no contentions to inflame him, knowing nought here worth passionately striving for, and being resolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men; if he hath no repining envy, seeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own; if he hath no fretful discontent, since he gladly doth acquiesce in the condition and success allotted to him, resigning his will to God's pleasure, taking all for best which thence doth occur, being assured that "all things shall work together for his good" and advantage; if he hath no spiteful rancours to corrode his heart, no boisterous passions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites, perverse humours, or corrupt designs to distemper his soul and disturb his life, whence then may sorrow come, or how can sadness creep into him?

What is there belonging to a Christian, whence grief naturally can spring? From God, "our exceeding joy," the fountain of happiness; from heaven, the region of light and bliss; from divine truth, which illustrateth and cheereth the soul; from God's law, which "rejoiceth the heart," and "is sweeter than honey and the honey-comb;" from wisdom, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness, all whose paths are peace;" from virtue, which cureth our afflictive distempers, and composeth our vexatious passions; from these things, I say, about which a Christian as such is only conversant, no sorrow can be derived; from those sweet sources no bitter streams can flow: but hell, the flesh, the world, darkness, error, folly, sin, and irreligion (things with which a Christian should have nothing to do, from which he should keep aloof, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon), these, these alone, are the parents of discomfort and anguish.

Isaac Barrow.

### EVENING .- JANUARY 26.

### THE JOYS OF EVERLASTING LOVE.

How happy are we,
Our election who see,
And venture, O Lord, for salvation on thee!
In Jesus approved,
Eternally loved,
Upheld by thy power we cannot be moved.

'Tis sweet to recline
On the bosom divine,
And experience the comforts peculiar to thine:
While, born from above,
And upheld by thy love,
With singing and triumph to Zion we move.

Our seeking thy face
Was all of thy grace,
Thy mercy demands and shall have all the praise:
No sinner can be
Beforehand with thee,

Thy grace is preventing, almighty, and free.

Our Saviour and friend His love shall extend,

It knew no beginning and never shall end:

Whom once he receives

His spirit ne'er leaves,

Nor ever repents of the grace that he gives.

This proof we would give
That thee we receive;
Thou art precious alone to the souls that believe:
Be precious to us!
All besides is as dross

Compared with thy love and the blood of thy cross.

Rippon's Collection.

### FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES. MATTHEW VI.

6 When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their

much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father

knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from

evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

### SING THE GLORY OF GOD.

Nature attend! join every living soul, Beneath the spacious temple of the sky; In adoration join, and, ardent, raise One general song !- To Him, ye vocal Gales! Breathe soft, whose Spirit, in your freshness breathes: Oh talk of Him in solitary glooms! Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely-waving pine, Fills the brown shade with a religious awe. And ye, whose bolder note, is heard afar, Who shake th' astonish'd world, lift high to heaven Th' impetuous song, and say, from whom, you rage. His praise, ye Brooks attune; ye trembling Rills! And let me catch it as I muse along. Ye headlong Torrents, rapid, and profound; Ye softer Floods, that lead the humid maze Along the vale; and thou, majestic Main, A secret world of wonders in thyself, Sound His stupendous praise, whose greater voice, Or, bids you roar, or, bids your roarings fall. Soft roll your incense, Herbs, and Fruits, and Flowers, In mingled clouds to Him, whose sun, exalts, Whose breath, perfumes you, and whose pencil, paints. Ye Forests bend; ye Harvests wave to Him; Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart, As home he goes beneath the joyous moon. Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth, asleep, Unconscious lies; effuse your mildest beams, Ye Constellations, while your angels, strike, Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre. Great source of day, best image, here below, Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide, From world to world, the vital ocean round, On Nature write, with every beam, His praise. The thunder, rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world; While cloud to cloud, returns the solemn hymn.

Thomson.

### THE LOVE OF GOD EXPLAINED.

When asked what it is to love God—what it is to love Christ—the questions may at first sight appear trifling, but rightly considered they will be found to involve much of the essence of religion. To ourselves they are most important. We can easily comprehend that it is not possible for us to feel the same love for the supreme invisible author of the universe, which we experience for a fellow-creature. What then is the nature of that love, which ought to animate our hearts for the God to whom we look up, with hope, through his bounty, to become ourselves divine.

The scripture teaches us that "God is a spirit, and that those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth:" and with due reverence. He is not of the earth, and therefore we cannot reach him with terrestrial love. It is with spiritual homage, unmixed with aught that is sensual, that the Most High is to be approached

by the love of his creatures.

It is difficult to prevent our terrestrial feelings from mingling in some degree with what ought to be wholly spiritual, and with our best efforts we cannot always seek his awful throne with due humility. We cannot at once sufficiently emancipate ourselves from the joys, the hopes, the fears of this state of being, to make our offering sufficiently pure; and pain and pleasure will influence us, even in moments when we wish to give ourselves wholly to devotion. Yet for this let us not be too much cast down. God created us with weaknesses, and did it with a view to our future happiness. For them we may look for some indulgence, but it is our business to be on our guard, that they do not prevail over us so far as to render our worship wholly terrestrial. The more we can lift ourselves above the grovelling cares of this world, the purer will be our relation with God.

Love of God requires us to keep his commandments, and we are told by our Saviour, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." He also tells us, "Thou shalt love God above all, and thy neighbour as thyself. Be ye therefore as perfect, as your father which is in heaven is perfect."

Let it then be understood how this love is to be manifested. It is not only in devotional exercises that the love of God and our Saviour is to be found, but it is in attempting to tread in the footsteps of Jesus. We should prove our love of God, by endeavouring to approach his perfection. The highest degree of mortal love aspires to intimate union with its object. We should aspire to intimate union with God. That is, we should seek, by following the doctrine of Christ, to render our thoughts and actions pure, to love our neighbours as ourselves, and to do to all others as we would they should do to us.

Acting thus, we should become the instruments of the Godhead in working good on earth—this may become the brethren of Jesus, as he has deigned to call us and the children of God.

Such is the love of God, as it was taught to man by our great Redeemer. We are but mortals, and subject to many weaknesses, but still we belong to the glorious community of spirits, of whom the highest stand nearer the eternal throne, infinitely nearer than we can do in this imperfect state of being. Let us then love God even as children love a fond parent, ever calling on Abba, our beloved father in heaven. Nor need we be ashamed of the tears we shed, when we prostrate ourselves before him in secret prayer. Our tears even are prayers, our sighs breathe the emotion of our hearts, and the fervour of devotion glistening in our eyes, images the reverence we feel for the Almighty.

We are but as helpless orphans, weak and powerless before God. He, like an affectionate parent, loves his children, and if in his honour we cannot raise an angel's strain, he will not require it from our incapacity. To the prayers we utter, feeble, and defective as they may be, he listens with indulgence. All sacrifices and honours which we may offer, can bear no value in the eye of God. It is by fulfilling his will on earth, by our gratitude to the Redeemer, and by constant endeavours to benefit our fellow-creatures, that we, approaching nearer to perfection, may hope to gratify him. Yes, yes, O God of Heaven! we

feel that, to gain thy favour, we must religiously fulfil those duties which have devolved upon us.

Thy will we desire—we resolve to perform. Bestow upon us the energy requisite to the due performance of the past. Our hearts are fully persuaded that this our prayer will be granted. We will not suspect that we want ability to perform virtuous actions, and by exerting ourselves to aid and comfort our fellow-pilgrims in this life, we must seek to honour thee. Our love to our God shall be seen in noble and generous deeds. and it shall be our study to promote peace and good will on earth. Contributing to the welfare of our suffering neighbours, we shall feel that we are attending to thy will. Alas! too many days have we numbered in which, instead of comfort, we have been the source of affliction to others. Too many days have we lost-too often have we forgotten to love God. Grant us wisdom and strength from above, that the error may not be repeated.

### MORNING.—JANUARY 27

THE POWER OF GRACE.

Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear!
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace taught my soul to pray, And made my eyes o'erflow; 'Twas grace which kept me to this day, And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.

Doddridge.

### THE GOOD PROTECTED. PROVERBS, CHAP. XXIV.

- 15 Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:
- 16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.
- 17 Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:
- 18 Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.
- 19 Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked;
- 20 For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.
  - 21 My son, fear thou the Lord.

# CHRIST'S SACRIFICE TO BE ALWAYS BORNE IN MIND.

With thy image before our eyes, O holy Redeemer! thy commandments in our hearts, we feel strengthened and fitted to overcome the world, and, dreary and thorny as our path may be, we continue our pilgrimage with cheerful confidence in our Lord, nor doubt but to finish it in joy. Recalling the firmness, with which it was thine faithfully to complete the mighty work confided to thee by the Creator of the universe, unsubdued by the mockery and persecution of cruel men, we feel animated with new courage to pursue the path which Christians ought to tread, regardless of the assaults we may sustain from malice or ingratitude. As Christians, we have the privilege to bear thy hallowed name, and by thy sufferings we have been dearly ransomed. Knowing this, and knowing thy promises, still we thanklessly neglect thee, forget our high destiny, and wander from thy ways, which lead to heaven! Like us, thou wast exposed to temptation, in all its various shapes, but from duty, and from God, nothing could seduce thy constancy, even when doomed to a death of agony; and shall we, then, deny our Saviour, or be ashamed to own that our trust is in him? Can we waver? can we doubt whether to yield to the allurements of the world, or to follow thee, and the dictates of our own conscience? Oh no! Thou shalt be our sacred model. As thou wast, while on earth, we will anxiously seek to become. Guided by this determination, we will advance in thy spirit, the spirit of truth, which the world knoweth not, the spirit of love which strengthens us for the performance of good works, and the spirit of holiness which will fortify us against pride; with them shall be found unbending faith, which supports the sufferer in distress, and piety, which leads to God. Feelings like these will be our comfort, and our sure support through life, and under the severest trials, we shall still look forward with hope.

How immensely valuable is the consolation which the goodness of our Saviour imparts to our souls! Never to forfeit this, but to become more worthy of the grace of God, shall henceforth be our grand object. Divine Intercessor! to thee be our understandings, our will, our all on earth, devoted! Let no inclination be known to our bosoms, no word escape from our lips, that may for a moment render us unworthy of thy redeem-

ing love. The sublimest joy we can know, must emanate from thee, and every blessed emotion we feel, shall but remind us of what thou hast endured for our sake. That thought shall restrain us when sin would allure, and teach us when suffering oppression, to submit, with perfect resignation, to the Divine will: so shall we, even here, taste, by anticipation, of that felicity which will be ours in the presence of our Lord. Then, while we enjoy the fruits of it, we shall learn all the value of thy atoning sacrifice, and praise thee evermore. To this end now assist us, O merciful Saviour! while with heartfelt thankfulness, we seek to glorify thy holy name!

### CHRIST WILL RECEIVE SINNERS.

Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may be also a consequence of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him. For this I observe, that strong desires to have, are attended with strong fears of missing. What a man most sets his heart upon, and what his desires are most after, he, oft times, most fears he shall not obtain. So the man, ruler of the synagogue, had a great desire that his daughter should live; and that desire was attended with fear that she would not: therefore Christ saith unto him, "Be not afraid." Mark v. 36.

Suppose a young man should have his heart much set upon a virgin, to have her to wife; if ever he fears he shall not obtain her, it is when he begins to love; now, thinks he, somebody will step in betwixt my love and the object of it; either they will find fault with my person, my estate, my condition, or something.

Now thoughts begin to work: she doth not like me, or something. And thus it is with the soul at first coming to Jesus Christ; thou lovest him, and thy love produces jealousy, and that jealousy ofttimes begets fears.

Now thou fearest the sins of thy youth, the sins of thy old age, the sins of thy calling, the sins of thy christian duties, the sins of thine heart, or something; thou thinkest something or other will alienate the heart and affections of Jesus Christ from thee; thou thinkest he sees something in thee, for the sake of which he will refuse thy soul.

But be content, a little more knowledge of him will make thee take better heart; thy earnest desires shall not be attended with such burning fears; thou shalt hereafter say, "This is my infirmity," Psal. lxxvii.

Bunyan.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 27.

DYING IN THE EMBRACE OF GOD,

Death cannot make our souls afraid, If God be with us there; We may walk through its darkest shade, And never yield to fear.

I could renounce my all below
If my creator bid,
And run if I were called to go,
And die as Moses did.

Might I but climb to Pisgah's top, And view the promised land, My flesh itself should long to drop And pray for the command.

Clasped in my heavenly father's arms
I would forget my breath,
And lose my life among the charms
Of so divine a death.

Watte

### COMFORT FOR THE MOURNER. JER. XXXI.

14 My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

16 Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded.

25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

### THE DEAD NOT TO BE LAMENTED.

To ye, to ye who are no longer on earth, our souls are hastening. Beloved ones who sleep in death's cold embrace, whose mouldering remains are veiled from our view, by a covering of earth, but whose immortal souls, in a happier state of being, now rejoice in the presence of your Redeemer, to ye beloved on earth, and who fondly returned our love, to ye who have already taken your flight to the eternal world, our hearts affectionately turn.

It is sweet to honour the memory of those once dear to us in this life, but who are now beheld no more. We will recal with tenderness, scenes passed with them which can return no more. Our tears shall testify the emotion of our hearts. These are the simple and sincere offerings of unaffected love. And do they sleep in the grave, who were once so dear to us? Is it even so? We turn to them with outstretched arms, but they see us not; our sighs are unheard, and our tears fall unheeded.

Thrice hallowed be the last resting place of the virtuous dead. Come to us, ye who have been bereft of the objects of your love, and our tears shall mingle in holy reverence for the departed. Ye gentle orphans who deplore the loss of a kind father, or a fond devoted mother, draw near. Approach, thou pale and disconsolate husband, who mournest the loss of a beloved consort; and come too, thou heart stricken mother, whose cherished offspring has been rudely snatched away by the hand of death. On all of you the hand of fate, the doom of nature, presses heavily. Oh! come and join us in spirit to seek the con-

secrated earth in which those ever to be fondly remembered objects, repose!

The first Christians performed their devotions over the tombs of their friends. There, like them, be it ours devoutly to bend the knee. Deeply do we feel the losses that we have sustained, but still we must not forget that we are Christians. In that character we have what must console. Let then our thoughts seek the graves of our friends, for where can the oppressed heart so rationally hope to gain relief, as on that spot in which the loved remains of those withdrawn from us, are treasured.

But God, be his dread name, breathed with reverential awe! is also there. The Almighty Father, the parent both of the living and the dead, the immortal and Omnipresent Creator, the God of life is near the sepulchre of the lamented dead, and there we seem to hear the voice of the Saviour, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavily laden, and I will give you rest."

Redeemer of the world, pour upon our wounded hearts that soothing consolation which the hand of man cannot supply. Let thy healing balsam fall on our wounded spirits. Thou only canst soothe, and in thee alone do we put our trust. It is thine to breathe peace to our souls, even as in thy last agonized moments on the cross, thy voice was raised to soothe thy weeping holy mother.

Words of good cheer reach us. They are thine. "For the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear my voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life."

Then why, why do we weep? Are these not the words of our Saviour? Have we not faith in him, that still our bosoms are swelled with unavailing sorrow?

Let sorrow be gone and disturb us no more. We are born for eternity, and those who have been called away, were not less the heirs of immortality. The grace and loving kindness of God, knows no limits, and "in him we live and move, and have our being."

Death, which at first sight strikes us as terrible, is but a temporary separation of pious friends. Their forms present themselves to our view, and suddenly vanish as in a dream. We shall awake and rejoin them. The joys of terrestrial existence give but a slight foretaste of those which we shall share in a blessed eternity, and which are shadowed out but to make us covet more earnestly, that happier life which awaits us from faithfully per-

forming our duty here, and from resting with firm reliance on the merits of our Redeemer Jesus.

For this life we can only view it as the mere vestibule of eternity. To thee, O Father, we desire to consecrate ourselves. With thee, none of those can perish who were dear to us here, nor will the bounty of our God fall off in this world, or in the next. The same immutable supreme being which opened to us the gates of this life, will open to us those of a blessed eternity; the same goodness which conducted those whose loss we mourn for a brief season here, will restore them to us when we have passed through "the valley of the shadow of death," no more to part.

Rest then, beloved departed spirits. Near the tomb which contains your mortal remains, our souls find peace. Ye have gone earlier to God than we have been permitted to do. We shall follow you into his blessed presence. We will

not mourn you as lost.

From the grave in which you sleep, our prayers ascend to the father of all mercies, who is never unforgiving, and whose love endures for ever. To him we solemnly vow never to despair of his goodness. Advancing in our career with cheerful confidence, the memory of those who are now no more on earth, dear as it must ever remain, shall wake no feeling of despondency.

With all the dignity of Christian zeal, let us raise our voices in honour of our Almighty Father! Let our lives be a continual hymn to his glory. "Praise the Lord, let us praise the Lord, and

speak good of his name."

### THE GRAVE OF THE JUST.

Here lie their bodies "in peaceable habitations, and quiet resting places." Here, they have thrown off every burden, and are escaped from every snare; the head aches no more; the eye forgets to weep; the flesh is no longer racked with acute, nor wasted with lingering, distempers. Here, they receive a final release from pain, and an everlasting discharge from sorrow. Here, danger never threatens them, with her terrifying alarms; but tranquillity softens their couch, and safety guards their repose.—Rest then, ye precious relics, within this hospitable gloom; rest in gentle slumbers, till the last trumpet shall give the welcome signal, and sound aloud through all your silent mansions, "Arise; shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you."

To these, how calm was the evening of life! În what a smiling serenity did their sun go down! When their flesh and their heart failed, how reviving was the remembrance of an all-sufficient Redeemer; once dying for their sins, now risen again for their justification! How cheering the well-grounded hope of pardon for their transgressions, and peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! How did this assuage the agonies, and sweeten the bitterness of death?—Where now is wealth, with all her golden mountains? Where is honour, with all her proud trophies of renown? Where are

all the vain pomps of a deluded world? Can they inspire such comfort, can they administer any support in his last extremity? Can they compose the affrighted thoughts; or buoy up the departed soul, amidst all the pangs of dissolution?—The followers of the Lamb seem pleased and triumphant, even at their last gasp. "God's everlasting arms are underneath," their fainting heads: His spirit whispers peace and consolation to their consciences. In the strength of these heavenly succours, they quit the field, not captives, but conquerors; with "hopes full of immortality." Hervey.

### MORNING.-JANUARY 28.

### GOD'S WONDERS.

Let children hear the mighty deeds
Which God performed of old;
Which in our younger years we saw,
And which our Fathers told.

He bids us make his glories known:
His works of power and grace;
And we'll convey his wonders down
Through every rising race.

Our lips shall tell them to our sons, And they again to theirs, That generations yet unborn, May teach them to their heirs.

Thus they shall learn, in God alone
Their hope securely stands,
That they may ne'er forget his works,
But practise his commands.

Watts.

### THE MIGHT OF GOD. JOB XL.

3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.
5 Once I have spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice;

but I will proceed no further.

6 ¶ Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

10 Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

11 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every

one that is proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

13 Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

### GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE.

Omnipotent God! in thy awful presence we appear. How awful is the thought which fills our souls when we reflect that thou art ever present.

Yet we rejoice in the same breath, at our happiness, being aware that thou hearest our prayers, and knowest all our wishes even in the moment of their being formed: and how largely are we honoured, that thou in thy majesty, surrounded by the seraphs of heaven, deignest for a moment to regard us whom thou has condescended to call from the dust, and endow with consciousness. Full of this glorious idea, our hearts glow with fond reverence while we adore. In all humility we bend before thee, devoutly exclaiming with the psalmist, "Truly the Lord is in this place: how holy is this spot! Here is nothing else but God's house. Here is the gate of heaven."

We desire, in the turmoil of life, never to forget that, as now, thou art always present, and from thee nothing can be veiled, however successfully it may be hidden from the world and from ourselves. Be thou ever present to our imaginations. As we mix with the world, and are exposed to its temptations, O let them serve but to prove and to purify the children of thy care! Grant that we may successfully strive against evil inclinations, and in all circumstances remember our duty, our destiny, and thy constant presence. In those occupations by which we sustain ourselves and our families, grant that we may constantly remember that it is from thy indulgent hand our every blessing must flow; and that all prosperity and comfort proceed from our God.

With ardent sincerity, we desire to raise our thoughts to thee, O Lord our Preserver! We are exposed to perils, and without thy support we must inevitably perish! If the magnitude of the dangers we have to meet depress us too much, let the wonders which thou hast performed, and the thought that thou art ever present, live in our recollection, and give us new courage. We shall then feel that even in the face of a countless multitude of foes, for thy votaries there can be no real danger. And grant, O God, if sadness come over us, and wild dismay, because thou delayest to answer our prayers, and that our tears fall unheeded, O then enable us to look forward with confident hope to that glorious salvation promised to thy worshippers, which thou in good season wilt not fail to accomplish.

Should the life we now possess prove full of sorrow, and fail to satisfy our cravings, we will cherish the memory of thy promises, and look forward to an eternal—to a more than consoling recompense. That which is seen "darkly as through a glass" in this world, will in the next be

fully revealed to our sight, and more than all we can learn to hope for here, thy unfailing goodness there will not fail to bestow. Animated by this cheering conviction, our souls will aim at keeping the Lord always in view, for he is our Creator, who rescues us from danger, and will finally requite us for suffering. He will let no good be wanting to those who put their trust in him, but will have regard to his people, and neitheir forsake nor forget them.

### GOD ALWAYS WITH HIS PEOPLE.

Though a believer may have his darkness, doubts and fears, and many conflicts of soul, while on his dying bed; yet usually, these are all over and gone, before his last moments come, and death does its work and office upon him. From the gracious promises of God, to be with his people even unto death; and from the scriptural accounts of dying saints; and from the observations I have made, through the course of my life; I am of opinion, that, generally speaking, the people of God die comfortably; their spiritual enemies being made to be as still as a stone, while they pass through Jordan, or the stream of death.

The consideration of the state of the dead, as of persons asleep, should moderate our sorrow for the loss of departed friends. What master of a family can be uneasy, at finding his family, his wife, his children, his servants, in a sound, fast sleep at midnight? May he not expect, that they will rise, in the morning, well and healthful, and ready to go about any service that may be proper for them? When Christ said, concerning Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;" "Lord," said the disciples, "if he sleep, he shall do well." The saints, who are fallen asleep, must needs do well. They cannot do otherwise than well, who not only sleep, but sleep in Jesus.

Dr. Gillo.

### EVENING.—JANUARY 28.

### SUPPORT FOR THE AFFLICTED.

O God, my refuge, hear my cries, Behold my flowing tears, For earth and hell my hurt devise, And triumph in my fears.

With inward pain my heart-strings sound, I groan with every breath; Horror and fear beset me round

Amongst the shades of death.

O were I like a feathered dove,
And innocence had wings:

I'd fly, and make a long remove From all these restless things.

By morning light I'll seek his face, At noon repeat my cry; The night shall hear me ask his Grace,

Nor will he long deny.

I cast my burdens on the Lord,

The Lord sustains them all;
My courage rests upon his word,
That saints shall never fall.

Watts.

#### GOD WILL CHASTEN BUT SPARE. ISAIAH XLVIII.

9 ¶ For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have

chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

17 Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

18 O that thou hadst harkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as

the waves of the sea.

22 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

### COMFORT IN WORLDLY AFFLICTION.

From various circumstances, at this moment, our sufferings are severe. Our souls are absorbed in sadness. In this situation, where shall we turn for comfort, O God, but to thee? Thou art merciful, and thy kindness endureth for ever ; thou only canst relieve the mind from the weight which oppresses it, and speak peace to the desolate heart. In vain may we seek for aid and compassion from our fellow-men: they but seldom will yield relief when in their power, or having the will to cure our grief, it is not within the range of their means. Shall we then cease to hope? Shall we conclude that neither in heaven nor in earth, can our souls rationally expect to find the solace they require? Can we look for no abatement of anguish which we feel to be almost insupportable? Oh ves! The Omnipotent Being who gave us life, will not suffer his creatures to remain in utter despair.

Whence came the evil we deplore? Let us solemnly, and earnestly, and searchingly, put that question to ourselves. In order to cure the disease, its cause should be ascertained. Can we hope to find relief from our anguish, while the cause of it, our depravity, still remains in our bosoms? How strongly comes the reflection over us, that we have often offended our Heavenly parent, and rendered ourselves deplorably unhappy by our own levity; that the powers given to us have been abused by sins against conscience and religion. To recal those facts, derogatory as they are, is beneficial, as the retrospect wakes an ardent desire for reformation. For what but our depravity have we really to mourn? Who among us is pure? Are not the evils which affect us, a just punishment for the transgression of which we stand self accused: and might we not have still greater distress to lament, if thy justice were not tempered by mercy? Of this we feel convinced, and happily we also know that great as our misdoings have been, if we are sincerely penitent, all will be freely pardoned, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour.

The grief which weighs so heavily on us, is perhaps in no slight degree of our own creating. Because all we hoped for has not been granted, we feel mournfully disturbed, and sickness assails the body, while despondency crushes the mind. We arrogantly think that we have not deserved a visitation so painful, which after all, is in a great measure the offspring of our own pride. Obstinancy, a repining spirit, or a want of that loving forbearance for others, which ought to glow in the heart of every Christian, are, it may be suspected, the real foes of our repose.

Such weaknesses may but too well account for our misery, and while ungovernable passions make us their slave, we have no right to expect comfort. How much happier should we be, if our lives were blameless! That in the fulness of thy bounty, thou wilt enlarge our understandings and purify our hearts, we make, this evening, the subject of our earnest prayer. Great God! thou knowest the confusion of our thoughts as well as the debility of our bodies, through the baneful dominion of sinful desires. Deign, O Lord, to incline our spirits to virtue, and happiness will return to those bosoms from which it has been expelled by sin.

But let us ask ourselves what is the evil we so acutely feel. Is it the loss of certain worldly advantages. Is all lost? Do we not retain those faculties which were originally the gift of our Creator? May not the mischief by care and industry be repaired? Can we not be happy without riches? However slender our means, true felicity may be found in a contented mind. Is it the calumnies, the scorn, or the hostility of men that disturb our peace? These we should not seriously regard, but looking up to God, it ought to be our care to elevate our thoughts far, far above the praise or censure of all the sons of men; happy, so we are not subjected by our consciences to reproach.

Despised as we may be by the votaries of this world, let us deem ourselves sufficiently distinguished, if we can but feel satisfied that our lives are not displeasing in the eye of the observant Sustained by conscious author of our being. rectitude, though forsaken by all those we called friends, let us rest assured that God will in due season provide for us, and then we shall cease to fear, and forget to repine.

This duly felt, let the tempest of the mind

subside, while we place all our confidence in that great, beneficent Deity, on whom we must depend. If a sparrow fall not to the ground without his decree, of us, rational and immortal spirits, he will take greater heed. It is, then, for us, contentedly to bear the weight which he may be pleased to impose, and in the hour of adversity turn with stedfast hope to him. Deign, Almighty Father. so to strengthen us, that we may repress our natural impatience, and avoid giving others pain through the evils which we must bear. The time we know will come when the sorrow we lament shall cease, and the joys of heaven be ours; when we shall look down on the greatest troubles of the world as but momentary exercises, prepared for us by infinite wisdom, to fit us for a higher and happier state of being.

#### THE ONLY HAPPY PEOPLE.

But some may say, "Are there any persons who live thus above the world, freed from its cares, and fears, and troubles?" Yes, thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. He has promised to make all things to work together for good to them that love him, and he has had witnesses in every age of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises. Read that little book of martyrs, Hebrews xi. and you will see how happy they were in God, not only in prosperity, but also when all the world was against them. Great were the triumphs of their faith. They chose to suffer affliction rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; they esteemed the reproach of Christ, and set more value upon it than upon riches and honours. And we have a great cloud of witnesses in the New Testament, who rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ, who blessed their revilers, prayed for their persecutors, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Hear one of them speaking the sentiments of the rest: "I account all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do account them but dung, that I may win Christ." Still there are some among us of Paul's mind. The Lord hath not left himself without witness. We have a few names. (may the Lord daily add to their number!) who can trust all their temporal affairs in the hands of Christ, and who find the happiness of having them in his management. He does all things well for them: what would make them unhappy he takes upon himself-" Cast thy burden on the Lord," says he, " and he shall sustain thee," and he does sustain the weight of it. and thereby frees them from anxious care, and gives them sweet content. They have enough, let them have ever so little of outward things, because they have got the pearl of great price. Christ is theirs, and the spirit of Christ enables them to make up all their happiness in him, and not in the things which perish in the using. Christ, with bread and water, is worth ten thousand worlds. Christ, with pain, is better than the highest pleasures of sin. Christ, with all outward sufferings, is matter of present and of eternal joy. Surely these are the only happy people living!

Romaine.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 29.

PRAISE DUE TO GOD.

Ye saints and servants of the Lord,
The triumphs of his name record,
His sacred name for ever bless;
Where'er the circling sun displays
His rising beams or setting rays,
Due praise to his great name address.

God through the world extends his sway;
The regions of eternal day
But shadows of his glories are:
To him whose majesty excels,
Who made the heaven in which he dwells,
Let no created power compare.

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom heaven's triumphant host,
And suffering saints on earth adore,
Be glory as in ages past,
As now it is, and so shall last,
When time itself shall be no more.

Watts.

# GIVE PRAISE TO THE LORD. PSALM CXLVII.

1 Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their

wounds.
4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all

by their names.
5 Great is our LORD, and of great power: his understand-

ing is infinite.

6 The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praises upon the harp unto our God;

8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the moun-

9 He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.

11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

# THE LORD GREAT IN COUNSEL AND MIGHTY IN DEED.

The folly and weakness of our views, the limited range of our faculties, often make us feel afflictingly incapable, and then what consolation so sweet as the thought that he who has all our lives, all our earthly and immortal concerns in his hands, is great in counsel, and mighty in deed! What our fate may be this day, or even this hour, we know not; while He who superintends all, can see every thing that is to occur, during the progress of our lives We may often feel

perplexed as to the course we should pursue; but the "still small voice" of conscience relieves us from this state of embarrassment. Why should we follow the propensities of our own hearts? why not resign all our cares to God, whose behests are always wise and good? We should then have less regret than we frequently now experience; and with what tranquillity might we look forward to the future, if, confiding in his bounty, the thought were ever present to our minds, that he can neither be controlled nor deceived!

No more, no more, must we oppose our feeble perceptions to infinite wisdom. We have had numerous proofs of the resistless might of our great Preserver. Let us not then distrust his greatness, nor ungratefully forget his long-continued bounty. We must, with due humility, keep our own weakness of intellect constantly in our thoughts, that we may the more deeply feel the

majesty of God.

Faithful to the intentions which we form at the commencement of this day, we shall know comfort and happiness, as we pass through it. That comfort, that happiness, vouchsafe to us, O Lord! from time to time. Grant that we may more acutely feel our own littleness, and never provoke thy displeasure by our foolish arrogance. Only in thee, eternal fountain of truth and wisdom, do we desire to seek counsel or knowledge. Then shall we find the way to true wisdom. To the wishes of a pious and satisfied heart, that places its whole trust in thy goodness, thou wilt graciously grant the fulfilment of its hopes, and bring all its labours to a happy result. From thee we shall gain prudence to discern the course we ought to take, and firmness and strength to pursue it to the end. In all things give us determination consistently to observe thy holy will. Let thy good counsel carry us safely through the strife of this world, and all the perils that oppose our progress, and finally, in a better world, let ours be the felicity joyfully to exclaim, "Thou great and strong God! Lord! Sabaoth is thy name. Great art thou in counsel, and mighty in thy doings!"

#### GOD ALWAYS DOING GOOD.

You believe, all of you, the providence of God: it is the doctrine even of natural religion. Can you distinguish between the acts of God and the course of nature? What is it that God doeth? He doth all, no doubt. He ruleth in heaven above, and in the earth beneath: but he is invisible to your eyes; nor can you certainly separate, in the transactions that lie before you, human weakness from Omnipotent power, or

draw the precise line in any one event which you now see, between God and nature.

He is ever doing good, and almost ever in a manner that exceeds alike our deserts and our understanding. His heavenly hand, like the hidden spring in a machine, works unseen, vet powerfully: is little in appearance, but in effect wonderful. He delivers from dangers we never feared, bestows a thousand benefits we knew not that we wanted. "Not a sparrow is forgotten before God: the very hairs of your head are all numbered." In the mean time the original cause of all is undiscerned, perhaps, alas! unthought of. He "is about my path, and about my bed." And yet, "Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him." Psalm cxxxix, 2; Job xxiii, 8, 9.

Dr. Ogden.

# EVENING -JANUARY 29.

THE VOICE OF NATURE.

The heavens declare thy glory, Lord, Which that alone can fill; The firmament and stars express Their great Creator's skill.

The dawn of each returning day Fresh beams of knowledge brings; From darkest night's successive rounds Divine instruction springs.

Their powerful language to no realm Or region is confined; 'Tis Nature's voice, and understood Alike by all mankind.

Watts.

### THE WORKS OF GOD. JOB, CHAP. XII.

7 Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the

fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

10 In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. 11 Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his

12 With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days. understanding.

13 With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

16 With him is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his. 17 He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the

judges fools. 18 He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins

with a girdle.

19 He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. 20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh

away the understanding of the aged.

21 He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

#### GOD'S WONDROUS DEEDS.

Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art? Know'st thou the importance of a soul immortal? Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds! Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze; Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more; Then weigh the whole; one soul out-weighs them all, And calls the astonishing magnificence Of unintelligent creation poor.

For this believe not me; no man believe; Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less Than those of the Supreme; nor his a few: Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself, For whom Omnipotence has waked so long; Has waked and worked for ages; from the birth Of Nature, to this unbelieving hour.

In this small province of his vast domain,
(All nature bow while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this sole end,
To rescue souls from death? The soul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.

Young.

# THE POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY IN HIS CREATION.

Still returning, at the close of day, to thee, O our God! we desire to shake off the wearisome, mind-depressing cares of this life, and to contemplate, with appropriate reverence, the wonders of thy all-creating hand. This, to us, is at once the sweetest recreation, and the most renovating exercise we can enjoy. In this silent hour, the majestic splendour of God's omnipotence, and wisdom, and all-abounding goodness, fill the mind with sacred awe.

In the woods, in the fields, the solemn hymn of Nature rises to heaven. Shall man alone remain mute, in the midst of a scene so exciting, so filled with various wonders, so vast, and so magnificent?

How shall we use our vision, to comprehend all the glory of the Creator? Shall we attempt to count the worlds which shine as suns from infinite distances in the nocturnal sky? or shall we meditate on the stupendous arrangement of the clouds, which contain within their mighty folds, hurricanes, lightnings, and floods?

Great in all his works, we need not seek for his wonders in the distant realms of the universe. Not more sublimely are his greatness and power manifested, in the paths of the sky, where worlds, and suns, and moons, range in their orbits, than in the veins of the smallest leaf of a flower, which expands before the genial ray of the sun. Great everywhere, the wonders of our God are the same in the heaven, his abode, as in the blade of grass,

which we trample beneath our feet.

The life of a single plant, might suffice to convince the sternest unbeliever of the existence of a Supreme Being, of consummate wisdom. But who can, with perfect accuracy, supply such a history?—a history which would shew in what manner a germ sprang from the small seed, which in a few years became a lofty and wide-spreading tree, capable of furnishing a habitation and sustenance to many hundreds, nay, to many thousands, of living creatures. The microscope shews, that every tree is a little world of various animals, and every leaf a city, containing a crowd of living insects, nearly or altogether invisible to the naked eve. That tree, their world, has stood for centuries, and thousands of generations have been born in it, have enjoyed life, and, in the course of nature, passed away. Our oaks frequently live five hundred years, and on Mount Lebanon, the cedars still flourish which grew there in the time of king Solomon.

Life, multiplied life, was the great object of creation. Inanimate nature could not feel the attributes of the Almighty. In his brief day, the frail ephemeron exults in the possession of life, and is therefore a nobler object than the stupendous rock, or the regal pyramid. From the fly to the elephant, and from the elephant to the rational God-adoring man, the links which connect the

several classes may be distinctly traced.

Even the air is filled with life. Every drop of water is a well peopled world; every fruit on a tree, a colony of insects; and, possibly, each atom of sand is an inhabited and populous mountain. The deepest cavities of the earth to which man has, as yet, penetrated, seem to exhibit but the upper rind of our globe, yet we see the species of beings which inhabit it are innumerable. Wherever we look, our eyes rest on countless germs of life.

In all we behold, the wisdom of the Almighty is conspicuous. But an angel, or superior spirit, acquainted with our highest range of thought, must smile at views so contracted as ours. The infant who imagines the whole world can be placed on a table, is not more deceived in the thought, than the most accomplished naturalist, when he attempts to grasp in his mind all the works of God. The animalculæ living in a single drop of dew, and the whale, present an astonishing variety; but these suggest but a single line in the

design of the mighty Architect of the universe. Eternal Father! with David, we devoutly feel that we "are fearfully and wonderfully made." With him we exclaim, "Marvellous are thy works, and that our souls know right well. How precious also are thy thoughts to us, O God! how great is their sum! If we should count them, they are more in number than the sands: when we are awake, we are still with thee." Mighty Lord! the farther we explore the wonders of thy creation, the more inexhaustible do thy riches appear—the more incomprehensible thy majesty. We tremble at the infinity of thy power, yet are acquainted with but the smallest instance of it. Compared with thy greatness, the earth we inhabit is but an atom of dust, surrounded by a small portion of air: yet this is that stupendous globe which fills us with amazement at its magnitude. What, O God! are we, that thou shouldst think of us! What are we, that our souls should be permitted to soar from the atom of dust on which our bodies are placed, and, passing worlds and worlds, seek the presence of their eternal Creator!

Our spirits are thy breath, thy love and thy eternity are theirs. Ever to recognize thy greatness and thy goodness shall be our chief object on earth. How glorious art thou in thy works,

O God!

# MORNING.-JANUARY 30.

GOD'S GOODNESS IN GRANTING MAN SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

Behold, the lofty sky Declares its Maker, God, And all his starry works on high Proclaim his power abroad.

The darkness and the light
Still keep their course the same;
His beams through all the nations run,
And life and light convey.

But where the gospel comes
It spreads diviner light;
It calls dead sinners from their tombs,
And gives the blind their sight.

How perfect is thy word!
And all thy judgments just;
For ever sure thy promise, Lord,
And men securely trust.

My gracious God, how plain Are thy directions given! O may I never read in vain, But find the path to heaven! CONFIDENCE IN GOD. PSALM XIAI.

1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed.

and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; 3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high.
5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God

shall help her, and that right early.

6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

### THE INDULGENT FORBEARANCE OF GOD.

How can we ever sufficiently acknowledge the patience with which our Father and God beholds the evil doings of his weak and perverse children! Do we not feel that we have often forgotten his laws, and sinned against his will; yet to us, who have so transgressed, he grants another day, that we may seek the path of salvation? This is a boon which ought to call forth our gratitude, and that gratitude it shall be our endeavour to shew, by living for heaven.

Oh, mighty Creator! what, what would have been our condition, had we been snatched away in the midst of our ungodly career! If, when our hours were consumed in sensual, soul-jeopardising pursuits, we had at once been called to our account,-if, while we rested in dull unconsciousness, thou hadst changed the ordinary sleep of nature into the sleep of death, what would have been the fate of our sinful, unprepared spirits! What if, at the moment we were panting for revenge on those who had offended us, when we had allowed "the sun to go down upon our wrath," or while engaged in rancorous, fraudulent, or cruel designs, or while the fervour of maddening passion rendered us negligent of death and eternity, what would have been our deplorable fate, had we then sunk into the grave! We must have become, Oh, fearful thought! inhabitants of that dreadful abode, where endless suffering punishes those who have spurned thy proffered mercy.

Thankful for the compassion already extended to us, with trembling awe, we cannot but reflect, what yet must become of our souls, should the bounty of our God now be withdrawn from us, to requite our past offences. Continue, O Lord! to bear with us, and grant us an interval for humiliation and repentance! Let thy Holy Spirit prevail over the obdurate heart! Since, in thy pity

for the weakness of mortality, David was permitted to survive his evil doings—since from erring Peter, thy favour was not withdrawn—and since Paul was snatched from that perdition to which the sinful persecution of thy saints was hurrying him, so let thy gracious kindness still be continued to us. Dispose our hearts freely to confess our misdeeds, and let us anxiously seek to retrace our steps, and amend our ways, as they did.

This day, Eternal Parent! through the intercession of thy Son, our Redeemer, we desire, that just meditation on thy forbearance may incline our hearts to thee, and withdraw us from the path of worldly temptation, in which we have tarried too long. Strengthen our resolution, while we earnestly seek for improvement, humbly imploring thy powerful aid. It is thine, thine alone, to animate us with the desire to fulfil our duty, and with strength and capacity to give that desire effect.

### GOD'S FREE DISINTERESTED LOVE.

Nor is God's love less disinterested than free. His grand design upon us is but to make us instruments and partakers of his glory, and to bring us to everlasting happiness, by a way that does as well elevate and dignify our nature, as the condition reserved for us will. His method of saving us, if but complied with, does here, as the apostle speaks, "Fit us for the inheritance of the saints in light," Col. i. 12; we being made, as St. Peter speaks, "Partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." ii. Peter, i. 4. So that those things, wherein the noblest of the philosophers placed their felicity, serve but to qualify and prepare Christians for that higher blessedness that is reserved by God, for those that love him; and cannot but be heightened and endeared, by the value which graces and virtues had given men on earth, for such a noble and rational kind of happiness, as is apportioned to them in heaven. What ends can he have upon us, whose goodness and his blessedness are both infinite? He was unconceivably happy, in his own self-sufficiency, before the creatures had a being; and sure that felicity that needed not themselves to be supreme, needs nothing that they can do. Nor was it his indigence that forced him to make the world, thereby to make new acquisitions, but his goodness, that pressed him to manifest, and to impart his glory; and the goods which he so overflowingly abounds with.

Boyle.

# EVENING.—JANUARY 30.

GOD OUR SUPPORT IN DEATH.

The Lord himself, the mighty Lord, Vouchsafes to be my guide; The Shepherd by whose constant core-My wants are all supplied.

He does my wandering soul reclaim, And, to his endless praise, Instruct my humble zeal to walk In his most righteous ways. I pass the gloomy vale of death,
From fear and danger free:
For there his aiding rod and staff
Defend and comfort me.

Since God does thus his wondrous love Through all my life extend, That life to him I will devote, And in his temple spend.

Doddridge's Collection.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. PHIL. III.

8 Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death:

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

### THE DREAD OF DEATH.

Could mankind, in the cradle of their infancy, know of the difficulties with which they must have to contend, and of the sufferings which they must undergo in their progress through this scene of strife, they would rather tremble to enter upon life, than shrink at its close from what is termed death.

Life has been aptly compared to a journey. Such it really is, but it is a journey commenced without our concurrence, and often concluded against our will. We begin in the morning twilight, emerging from utter darkness, and hasten to darkness not less profound. These changes are startling, but all is ordained by God.

Our moments, our hours fly rapidly away. Fain would we continue to revel among the gay flowers which blossomed around us in the morning of our youth, but a resistless, all-potent arm, carries us away. The buds and blossoms wither in our hands, and the sultry mid-day sun is now over our heads. We gaze on friendly retreats, in the cooling shade of which we would gladly stay, but we are still urged on, and cannot even long possess the new joys which we may find on the road. The sad recollection of vanished bliss is all we can preserve. The evening comes in, and behind it advances black sepulchral night. We would recal the sober loveliness of the evening, but this is not permitted; and "go on, go on," is the stern command which sounds in our ears. Fondly we would pause on the road, that our journey may not conclude too speedily, but we strive against

the mysterious power which first urged us forward in vain. We are hurried, and all things with us, down the rapid stream of time, every bright and attractive object is lost to our view, and we ourselves are at length left in total darkness, for-

gotten by our fellows.

And such we know is the fate of man. dwell not with horror on that night from which we found ourselves called when we first started into existence: and why should we contemplate that night to which, in the course of nature, we are all hastening with trembling alarm? And what is this life? Is it a thing of our own creation? No, it is the wonderful effect of causes set in motion by a higher power.

But let us ask what is death? Is it a happy oblivion of past cares and sorrows which have all faded into nothing? No, it is the opening of a connection with the world of spirits, it is the forming of more sublime relations with beings of a higher order, a gentle necessary step in the pro-

gress of creation.

What reason then can we have for dreading death? Why should life appear preferable? When reviewing the past, few would wish to go through the career from infancy to age again. been the will of our Maker strongly to imbue us with a love of life, which causes our feelings to revolt against everything that presents to us the ghastly images of death.

But for the affection we conceive for life, its continuance or renewal after death would be to us a matter of indifference, and we should give ourselves no care to reach a higher state of perfection. But the desire nothing can subdue, and growing on this, comes the salutary thought that it behoves us to spend our time wisely and well, that we may be deemed worthy of another life.

Death itself is not dreadful, but it is made so by the ideas we associate with it. Viewed as it

really is, its terrors will vanish.

Setting too high a value on the things of this world is one of the causes of that love of life which we all feel. The only true value belonging to it is, that it offers an opportunity for labouring our souls towards perfection, by worshipping God, and promoting the welfare of our fellow mortals. When we can no longer do these, existence has lost its charm, and we then sigh for a happier state of being.

Those noble spirits had a knowledge of sublimer joys than this life affords, who heroically suffered foul persecution, and an agonising death in the cause of religion, to secure the happiness of others. They knew the real value of life, and laid it down with dignity and courage, to further

a great and virtuous object.

How exalted is the man of religion, even in this world. His eyes fixed on eternity, his hand stretched forth in charity, like Enoch, he seems to walk with God, and serenely smiles at the storm which rages around. But never does religion appear so glorious, as in the hour of a good man's death. Then its dazzling splendour is indeed sublime.

O blessed Soother of the human mind, sweet Glorious link which connects the creature with the Creator, never forsake our hearts! In thy sacred revelation, O Jesus! we desire to live and die. All that is appalling in death, vanishes before the power of thy word. In thee we breathe, and feel assured that we shall never die. What we name death, is but an ennobling transformation. Our God is not a God of death. He is the life, and our lives and souls are the work of his hands. We, we are essentially life: we animated the dust which took this human form, and our souls will still survive when that dust which served us as a garment, is scattered again on the surface of this earth.

Heavenly and everlasting God! Creator of all things, from whom we derive our being, and to whom our spirits will return, we desire to be ever thine. We indeed cling to life, but death through the merits of our Saviour is stripped of his terrors. It can never awe us so as to cause our hearts to swerve from virtue. Happy shall we be, if when called away, we feel we can exult in having "fought the good fight," and pursued, as far as our capacity would admit, a virtuous course. Then shall we look with confident hope to eternal

life.

Death shall no more disturb us, O God, the author of our being! for death is not an everlasting sleep. It but introduces to a new and more glorious existence, to our Almighty Creator in glory.

THE DEAD NOT TO BE REGARDED WITH SUPERSTITIOUS REVERENCE.

Affection, equally anxious about the eternal destinies of the dead as of the living, led even some of St. Paul's convertsthe Thessalonians-into mistakes touching the condition of their friends who had departed in the faith, and concerning the coming of the day of the Lord. (See 1 Thess. iv. : 2 Thess. ii.) In process of time, similiar affection multiplied errors. collect the relics of the dead, to keep vigils at the tombs of the saints, to burn lights and hold assemblies over their ashes might be very natural means of showing reverence and affection for the departed. But to what gross conceptions did not these things lead? To pay decent respect to the relics of holy men, and to recal to memory their precepts and examples-to speak of them with veneration, and to pray to be made like them—this is always to be commended. But is there any real virtue in the dead bones of departed saints, or in the remains of their vestments? Or is it lawful to invoke the dead in prayer? What, indeed, is more natural, when some dear and venerated object is gone to join, in the unseen world, the company of "just men made perfect," than to cherish the thought that the beatified spirit will be with our spirit, will pray for us before the throne of grace, and help us in this world of trouble? But for this belief is there any divine authority in the book of revelation? And if not, may we make it a prescribed article of faith, or recommend it as a beneficial practice. The arm of the Lord is not shortened, and it may be his pleasure to display his power by supernaextension of his kingdom. But are miracles likely to be of very frequent occurrence? And may not the pious be sometimes deceived by imaginary miracles? Are there not alleged miracles which savour of delusion and imposture, and the very extravagance of which must excite disbelief? Such were the doubts and reflections of Vigilantius; his scruples led to serious consideration and enquiry. He "searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so." He expended vast sums of money on the translation and circulation of scripture;and at length he openly declared his convictions, and raised his testimony against relic-worship, the invocation of saints, nocturnal services at the sepulchres of the dead, monastic vows, and the obligation of clerical celibacy.

Dr. Gilly.

# MORNING.—JANUARY 31.

THE SPIRIT INVOKED.

Come, gracious spirit, heavenly dove, With light and comfort from above; Be thou our guardian, thou our guide! O'er every thought and step preside.

Conduct us safe, conduct us far From every sin and hurtful snare; Lead to thy word that rules must give, And teach us lessons how to live.

The light of truth to us display, And make us know and choose thy way; Plant holy fear in every heart, That we from God may ne'er depart.

Lead us to holiness,—the road That we must take to dwell with God; Lead us to Christ,—the living way; Nor let us from his pastures stray.

Rippon's Collection.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RULE OF LIFE. ROM. XII.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man

that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all mem-

bers have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that

teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is

evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.
15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

#### MAN'S FORGETFULNESS OF DEATH REPROVED.

Tell me, some God! my guardian angel! tell Tell me, some Gou: my guardian anger: car What thus infatuates? what enchantment plants The phantom of an age 'twixt us and death, Already at the door? He knocks; we hear, And yet we will not hear. What mail defends Our untouched hearts? What miracle turns off The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers Is daily darted, and is daily shunned? We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves, Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still! We see Time's furrows on another's brow, And Death entrenched, preparing his assault: How few themselves in that just mirror see! Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong! There death is certain; doubtful here: he must, And soon; we may, within an age, expire. Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green; Like damaged clocks, whose hand and bell dissent; Folly sings six, while nature points at twelve.

Absurd longevity! More, more, it cries: More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind. And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails? Object and appetite must club for joy: Shall folly labour hard to mend the bow. Baubles, I mean, that strike us from without, While nature is relaxing every string! Ask thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within. Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease, Has nothing of more manly to succeed? Contract the taste immortal: learn e'en now To relish what alone subsists hereafter. Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever. Of age the glory is to wish to die: That wish is praise and promise; it applauds Young. Past life, and promises our future bliss.

# RENEWAL OF GOD'S FAVOUR.

Why should we rejoice at the opening of another morning, had we not the soothing conviction that the grace of God is renewed in our hearts from day to day? What would life be worth, if it were continued unblessed by the superintending providence of an indulgent Deity? How dreary would this world be without thy brightening smile, Almighty Father! That cheers our lives and carries us happily through our pilgrimage, superior to the ills of life. The sun, as it descends the sky, we can look up to with sincere exultation, since it conveys in a voice not to be mistaken, the assurance of thy continued mercy and support.

That is a treasure which we revere; and nothing more ardently do we desire, all-bounteous father. than to be able to occupy the whole of our lives with thy praise. Thy abounding mercies ought to stimulate us unceasingly to offer thee our adoration with a pure heart: while at the same time we are found sincerely striving to benefit our fellow-creatures. Thou forgivest us, and a consciousness of this, ought to dispose our hearts to pardon the folly, the ingratitude, and the cruelty of those who trouble us. Thy providence cheers us with happy visions of immortal bliss: let this induce us to promote the welfare of all with whom we associate, and to sincerely pity, and, if possible, assist those who suffer under the pressure of calamity.

With what satisfaction could we recal this day, if blessed as we are by friends, and even by thee, our Creator, we, at its close, insensibly compose ourselves to sleep. How exhilarating it is to feel, that through thy mercy we may lie down with consciences cleansed from past overwhelming sin. That reflection will sustain our spirits under any affliction to which it may be thy pleasure to subject us. Secure of thy ultimate favour, our hearts will know how to submit to thy will with holy resignation, assured that the trials we may encounter, will tend to our good, and that in due season, thy former kindness will be renewed.

With this day another month reaches its close. To recount all the benefits which we have to acknowledge, would be almost as difficult as to count the grains of sand on the shores of the ocean. Should we, however, also enumerate the transgression of which we have been guilty, how undeserving must we confess ourselves of thy kindness, of even being numbered among thy children; among those a Saviour has ransomed. Most

humbly we bend before thee, O God! For all in which we have offended, grant us pardon through the merits of our Redeemer. Pardon those acts of omission and commission which press heavily on our awakened consciences, and let us live through this last day of the month, in such a frame of mind as may not be displeasing to thee. Grant that soothing evidence of this may not be withheld. Let us once more experience thy care and benevolence, and let such grace manifest itself in our thoughts and actions, as may create in our favour a new claim to thy forbearance and love.

# EVENING .- JANUARY 31.

PRONENESS OF THE HEART TO SIN.

O Jesus, Jesus, my good Lord, How wondrous is thy love, Thy patience, pity, tenderness, Which I each moment prove!

For O! how faithless is my mind, How apt to turn aside, And wander in its own deceits, Of reasonings and pride!

How doth the old corruption strive, And fight to reign again! There's surely not a heart like mine, So wretched dark and vain.

On me, my King, exert thy power, Make old things pass away; Create all new, draw me to thee, Still nearer every day.

Chastise me, when I do amiss,
Let not one thought arise,
Which can displease thee, gracious Lord,
Of grace send fresh supplies.

Bretheren's Collection.

### SAUL RECLAIMED. ACTS, CHAP. IX.

10 ¶ And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he bath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was

baptized.

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damaseus.

20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

### THE SINNER PERSECUTES HIS SAVIOUR.

Neglectful as man unhappily is of his eternal welfare, still it cannot be denied, that every one sooner or later in the course of his life hears the voice of God inwardly. Sometimes, it comes to him in soothing and encouraging whisperings, sometimes it thunders in his ear a terrifying menace or reproach, like that heard from heaven by Paul, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

The voice of the Deity speaks to us at all seasons. We hear it while we gaze on the splendour of his creation, shining in the glory of summer: while we contemplate the goodly scene, breathe the pure air, and mark the radiant dew-drop on the bending grass, and then raise our eyes from the grovelling worm beneath our feet to the ever moving orbs of heaven, or to the eagle that daringly wings his flight towards the sun, all tell us of the greatness, and goodness, and holiness, and power of our sublime Creator. How good, how gracious is he, how mean how unworthy are we; how perfect is all that comes from his hand, how miserably defective all that is fashioned by ours! This we feel, surveying the wonders wrought by divine intelligence, and then recalling our own ungrateful negligence, comes from within, the admonitory whisper, "Why persecutest thou me?"

See autumn copiously bestow new evidence of our Creator's munificence. The fields, the orchards, the vineyards, the gardens, offer their delicious fruits for the sustenance and refreshment of animal life. We look on these, and then the thankless heart may sadly reflect, possessed of abundance itself, how recklessly have we permitted the tears of our fellow-creatures suffering from want, to flow unregarded. We compare the magnitude of God's gifts to us, with the little we have done for our afflicted brethren, and then how selfishly grinding must we appear to ourselves! Then do we reproach ourselves with this unworthy that for a savisor's love, and the voice of God

in mercy seems to inquire, "Why persecutest thou me?"

Nature sickening shrinks beneath the desolation of winter. The thunder cloud threatens, and the roaring winds fill our bosoms with alarm. These compel us to betake ourselves to solemn The voice of God is heard in the dread sounds which accompany the lightning's glare, when its terrifying fires strike, indifferently, the monarch's palace or the peasant's hut. It is heard in the moans of the dying, when the depopulating pestilence and wide spreading disease are on every side deplored. It is recognised when the aged oak is violently uprooted by the raging storm, or the shattered, dismantled ship, is swallowed in the vast abyss of the ocean. Then the thrilling voice of God addressed not to the dead, but to the living, is heard by those who stand trembling beholders of these evidences of that Creator's power, and pointing to the fearful spectacle, it demands, "Why persecutest thou me?"

Can mortals persecute their God? What is meant by persecuting God? In this world, he who is said to persecute another, commonly does so because that other has done exactly the opposite of what he wished to see done; for preventing a good which he sought to compass. Children, forgetful of their duty, persecute their parents when they repay with neglect or contempt, the kindness which watched over their infancy, and provided for their advancing youth, and give themselves up to a vicious course of life.

We certainly cannot persecute God as we persecute our fellow-mortals. Personally we see him not, nor can we persecute Jesus as the Jews did, by mocking, scourging, and finally hanging him on the cross. Paul had no longer the power to persecute the Saviour of mankind as a helpless mortal, when he had ascended to heaven, yet was his voice from on high conveyed to his ear, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

There is a God, the conscience of the sinner exclaims, while his acts, with equal distinctness, deny his existence. With a sense of truth and virtue in his heart, his course is one of outrage and duplicity. In the temple of God he sees a Christian assembly, bending with appropriate humility and devotion before the eternal; he hears the announcement of his word, yet returns to his dissipated ways without attempting to tread in the path of holiness. In this the laws of God are treated with contempt, which no man can do with impunity. Thick gathering thoughts will subse-

quently come over his heart, in moments of emotion or distress: when, for instance he has almost by miracle escaped some startling danger, when unlooked-for benefits have been realized: when he finds himself tortured by the pangs of sickness: or when lingering near the grave of a departed friend. In such moments he confesses the power of the Most High, feels his own unworthiness, and shrinks at hearing the stinging reproach, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

Though strong the effect thus produced, it is too frequently but transient. He is inwardly smitten and breathes vows of sincere repentance: he sees the empty unsubstantial character of all the vanities of life; perceives that virtue alone can render man happy, and resolves to dedicate his future life to God. But his penitence is shortlived, his ardour soon abates, he becomes hardened in his iniquities, till in the spirit of growing indifference, he declares that in those moments when he was awake to his real situation, he was carried away by fanatical enthusiasm. The yow he had sworn, he recklessly violates, the things of time engross his care and withdraw his thoughts from those of eternity, and deferring to the judgment of men, he fears not to encounter the displeasure of God. Thus is the majesty of the Supreme Being insulted by the hardened sinner. To an earthly prince or monarch, the vow made would have been dutifully and honourably kept; given to the Mighty Judge of all the earth, it is daringly broken. The offender is anxious to appear just and good before men, but cares not what he may be known to be by God. Such is the mad ungrateful course pursued by the presumptuous transgressor, and then is the reproach from God provoked, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

O may all who understand this appeal to their hearts, turn from the wickedness of their ways! Why should we persecute infinite goodness? Why neglect the gracious Being who sustains us, and whose powerful support withdrawn, we must sink the next moment into dust? By our acts, why deny his existence, who, in a thousand ways, perpetually reminds us of his presence?

May each withdraw from his evil courses, as Paul did. When the warning voice sounded in his ear, from being one of the persecutors, he became one of the most zealous and devoted followers of Jesus, his true representative in word and deed. May we feel as he did. Even our devotions this evening, partake of the character

of an appeal from God to the heart, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

O Gracious Saviour, grant that we may never be numbered among thy foes! Let us not forget that every act we commit against others, is committed against thee, and we desire ever to remember that all comforts bestowed by us on our fellow-creatures, are acceptable offerings in thy sight.

Lord of all! Great Parent of the human race, with sorrow we recal our past wanderings. Thou hast spared us the visitation we provoked, vet forgetful of thy loving kindness we have again forgotten thy laws. Now be gracious to us, and think no more of our past misdeeds. Pardon, pardon thy offending children, who this evening raise their thoughts to thee with feelings of sincere penitence! Our own tears, bitter as they may be, cannot wash away the stains which are upon us. This can only be done by thy mercy and the merits of our Redeemer. Yet pardon all our fearful errors, and for the time to come our thoughts, our lives, we trust, will be found more holy, that at length we may not fear, with a comforted spirit, to address our bountiful Creator, and exclaim, "We no longer persecute thee, O Lord."

# CHRIST'S LABOURS TO GAIN MERCY FOR SINNERS.

It was expedient that Christ should go away; that he should go into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us, and to be our advocate there, to answer the slanders and calumnies of the great accuser of the brethren, who accuseth them before the throne: that he should not only do this, but rescue and save us, even when the accusation was true. "There is one that accuseth you," said Christ, "even Moses." The law accuses and condemns us all, because we all have broken it, and are become guilty before God, as a Lawgiver and a Judge. But what saith mercy by the gospel? "Deliver the man; I have found a ransom.' Christ was first our priest; he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins; and then went, with his own blood, into the holy places, to make atonement for those, as sinners, whose innocence, otherwise, as advocate, he could not defend. On this foot he went, to reinstate us in the favour of God; to take possession of heaven for us, as our surety and representative, "the first-born among many brethren;" to prepare a place for us against that great and joyful day, when he shall return in like manner as he went, to receive us to himself, that where he his, there we may be also.

Bishop Horar.

# MORNING .-- FEBRUARY 1.

NONE REJECTED BY JESUS.

Sinners, hear the joyful news,
God, your Maker, is your friend:
Think not, that his wrath pursues,
That his curses you attend.

"As I live," Jehovah saith, I do not desire your death, Rather, rather would I see Each poor sinner turn to me."

O then turn to him and live, Turn to him with all your wee. He is ready to forgive,

Ready, blessings to bestow.
Outstretched see his arms of love,
Haste his tender heart to prove,
Haste, ye sinners, you will find
Jesus casteth none behind.

Bretheren's Collection.

KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGION, I COR. III.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver,

precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon,

he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the

spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

# MAN'S DUTY TO CHRIST.

The duty, and the firm determination of every Christian must be to adhere to the Redeemer of mankind. Recalling the many sorrows which were known to him, reflecting what our present condition must have been but for his condescending mercy, what claim can be less questionable than that which he holds on our homage and gratitude? It is our duty to adore him, and to be prepared to live for him, and to die for him. How mighty was the task which he had to perform! how great the affliction which he had to endure! in order to raise us from the degradation imposed by the thraldom of sin, to that joyful state of children of God, to which, by his taking upon himself mortality, we have been elevated. Duty and inclination alike call on us to follow when he leads the way. He loved us even to death, he alarmed the guilty, he comforted the poor, yet had not a place where he could lay his own head. Such enduring kindness, shall we requite with ingratitude. If we live, let us live to the Lord, if we die, let us die to the Lord; and how supremely blessed shall we essentially prove if we devote ourselves with all sincerity of heart to our gracious Redeemer. We shall then gain that peace which is not of this world, and under all adverse circumstances, our spirits will be firm and serene, because we shall know that our Lord is one who never will forsake us, and whose power is equal to his benevolence.

The reflection that he has compassion on our failings, seeing he has known in his own person, human infirmity, is most cheering. The curse which lay upon us, he took upon himself, he tasted the bitterness of death that we might live. Be this to us in all circumstances, a source of unutterable comfort. The atonement which he has offered for us, and which has been accepted, may well give our hearts repose. O let us never forget that it is our duty, as ransomed sinners, to acknowledge the obligation before the world, and to live in the faithful performance of duty and in the communion of Christ. This will be our stay and support, and our comfort even when struggling with the pangs of dissolution.

With thee, O Jesus! what happiness may be ours. What then shall prevent it? With the opening of this day we solemnly renew our vow to dedicate our souls to thee for ever. When the vanities of life would allure, let thy goodness constitute our joy, and steel us against temptation. Let thy memory check any mean propensity that may rise in our bosoms. Impart wisdom, strength, and hope to cheer our existence. In the course of this day we may witness scenes, and hear language calculated to lead us astray: our own hearts may seek to withdraw us from thee to revel in sinful enjoyment: but O, be thou near, to fortify the wavering resolution, that we may remain unshaken in our faith. Strengthen, animate, and grant us courage to strive with, and to conquer the enemy of our peace. Enable us to repel temptation, and in every situation of life and even in our dying moments to retain the unalterable resolution never to forsake our Saviour Jesus.

WORLDLY WISDOM LEADS NOT TO CHRIST.

In the wisdom of God it pleased him, that the world by wisdom should not know him. Now, if by their wisdom they cannot know him, it follows, by that wisdom, they cannot come unto him; for coming to him, is not before, but after some knowledge of him.

The wisdom of man, in God's account, as to the knowledge of Christ, is reckoned foolishness. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world:" And again, the "wisdom

of this world is foolishness with God."

If God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world; and again, if the wisdom of this world is foolishness with him,

then verily it is not likely, that by that a sinner should become so prudent, as to come to Jesus Christ, especially if you con-

sider.

That the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and so of salvation by him, is the very thing that is counted foolishness to the wisdom of the world. Now if the very doctrine of a crucified Christ be counted foolishness by the wisdom of this world, it cannot be that by that wisdom a man should be drawn out, in his soul, to come to him.

God counted the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, therefore by that wisdom no man can come to Jesus Christ. For it is not likely that one of God's greatest enemies should draw a man to that which best of all pleased God, as coming to Christ doth, now, that God counteth the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, is evident,

For that it casteth the greatest contempt upon his Son's undertaking, afore is proved, in that it counts his crucifixion foolishness; though that be one of the highest demonstrations

of divine wisdom.

Because God hath threatened to destroy it, and bring it to nought, and cause it to perish: which surely he would not do, was it not an enemy, would it direct men to, and cause them to close with Jesus Christ.

He hath rejected it from helping in the ministry of his word, as a fruitless business, and a thing that comes to nought.

Because it causeth those to perish that seek it, and pursue it, And God has proclaimed, that if any man will be wise in this world, he must be a fool in the wisdom of this world, and that is the way to be wise in the wisdom of God. "If any man will be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Bunyan.

# EVENING.-FEBRUARY 1.

SAVING GRACE.

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! That saved a wretch like me; I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear, The hour I first believed.

The Lord hath promised good to me. His word my hope secures; He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures,

Bretheren's Collection.

GRACE TO ALL. II. CORINTHIANS, CHAP. I.

2 Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted. it is for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the conso-

lation.

### THE UNIVERSAL FATHER.

Father! how sweet, how hallowed is that name! how ennobling the thought, that God is our Father! Should not our hearts glow with the proudest emotions? Should we not experience the most sacred transports, when we dwell on it, and feel our hearts dissolve in gratitude and love, when we reflect that ours is the glorious privilege, to call the God of heaven our Father! the infinite, the great, the Almighty author of the universe, at whose awful fiat thousands of worlds were called into existence, and who is adored by countless hosts of immortal spirits. Ours is a rare pre-eminence which permits us to approach his throne, as a child seeks his earthly parent, while as a parent he condescends to look on us with favour and compassion. This vast blessing we owe to the gracious interposition of our Redeemer. It is by him that the majesty of God, otherwise too awful to be contemplated, is softened down by compassion. Through him we are invited to breathe all our sorrows into the ear of the Eternal, even as children may communicate their sorrow to a kind Father, and therefore, be it ours, this evening, to lay open our whole hearts to him. He is our Father, therefore may we confide in his disposition of all things to promote our welfare, however difficult we may find it to comprehend the means it may be his pleasure to use, for the accomplishment of his end.

"Our Father, which art in heaven!" So Christ has taught that we are to pray to him; for he is the Father, not only of us who are here assembled, but of all the human race. Our prayers, therefore, should be addressed to him, not merely to call a blessing upon ourselves, but to invoke his goodness for all our fellow men, as we are included in the prayers of all the children of God. As Christians, we all address the Creator in the same words, and prefer the same petitions. We cannot assist all our suffering brethren, with aid, advice, or alms, but we can devoutly raise our thoughts for them, in humble supplication to him who

reigns above the sky.

Father in heaven! Our Father is the infinitely majestic and good Deity, the God of all gods, the uncreated and supreme Governor of the universe,

through whose illimitable power all things, from the sun in the firmament to the atom of dust beneath our feet, have received their form and being. His presence fills heaven and earth; he dwells in ineffable light and unapproachable majesty. If we are suffered to draw near his throne, with filial love and sincerity, his greatness must inspire solemn awe, and reverence the most profound. We love him as a Parent, and revere him Earthly fathers are feeble, shortas a God. sighted, helpless creatures, and a few years must consign them to the tomb. Our heavenly Sire lives eternally. He is Almighty; his kindness is beyond all measure. Shall we not then lift our thoughts to him with confidence, love, and adoration?

"Father in heaven! hallowed be thy name!" Yes, thy might, thy majesty, must be owned by all rational minds. So often as thy sacred name is uttered, our souls ought to glow with fervent devotion. God is indeed invisible to us here, and incomprehensible. Eternity is wanting to enable us to comprehend all his glory; yet even here, wherever our vision may travel, some traces of it cannot fail to fix our attention. The entire creation is a magnificent temple, in which his great name is indelibly inscribed; and it is so legible, that none can mistake, or find themselves incapable of reading it. He is reflected in all we see that is grand or noble in this world; but he has not disdained to come to the assistance of our weakness, and has made himself still better known to us in his revelation; Christ was the visible representative of the Godhead—the type of his glory. All that he spake, all that he performed, all that he endured, bore this superscription, "To the honour of my Father who sent me." Oh! may such be also our constant ambition. Our whole existence, announces that of him from whom we derived it, through whom "we live, and move, and have our being.'

"Hallowed be thy name." We must be thoroughly conscious that God gains nothing through the worship of his creatures. The brightness of the sun cannot be assisted by the light of a taper, but the latter may in some degree assist us in our darkness; and so the name of God is hallowed, when his Spirit anoints our souls. The word of God diffused among us, we regulate our body by a more perfect observance of his laws, and resignation to his holy will.

O Father! it is our most earnest wish that thy name may indeed be hallowed by us, and by all

mankind. To thee it is known how weak are our best resolutions, how depraved our hearts, and of ourselves we can compass nothing for thy glory. It has been promised by the Saviour, that thy Holy Spirit will not be withheld from those who seek it in earnest prayer. On that promise we place the fullest reliance. We entreat, in our Redeemer's name, that the blessed influence of thy Spirit may descend upon us. O God, enlighten our understandings, that we may pursue the right path. Cleanse our hearts, enlarge our minds, and grant that we may this night make the most beneficial use of thy holy word. Let it make a lasting impression now, and produce goodly fruit in our future lives. Grant that faithful labourers may be found in thy vineyard; give to all Christian communities true-hearted, holyminded pastors and instructors, who may not disgrace their important charge by unseemly levity, or degrading immorality, but be pleased to ordain that they may labour to teach the truth, and successfully enforce it by their own example. It is by the power of thy holy word, that we thy children must, in a spiritual sense, be born to thee, till, in the eternal world, it is ours to know thee better, and to praise thee more worthily.

### GRACE CHANGES MAN'S NATURE.

I think all saving grace attainable in this life is comprehended under these two general heads-illumination, or believing with the heart, and sanctification of the Spirit to obedience: and so St. Paul sums it up, ascribing the salvation of the Thessalonians to sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. Particular applications of one or other of these graces have particular names assigned: as it excites us, contrary to the natural man, to pray for spiritual rather than temporal blessings, and that too with a warmth and fervour of devotion, which reaching after things not seen nor distinctly apprehended, flames out beyond the bounds of language, in aspirations that cannot be expressed, it is called the "Spirit of prayer and supplication:" as he spurs us on when we are sluggish in our course, and are apt to loiter among the amusements of the world, and draw back in cases of difficulty and distress, his work in our hearts is called "quickening" and "exciting grace;"as he enables us to bear afflictions, and not bear them only, but choose them; nay, not choose them only, but enjoy them-this is owing to his supporting grace, by which "he fills us with all joy and peace in believing, makes us abound in hope through his power, and to walk in his comfort."

But it is the poor man's privilege to count his treasure; the Holy Ghost is shed "abundantly" upon us, and it is impossible to number the drops of this plentiful effusion, or distinguish them severally which imperceptibly run into one another. Our occasions and necessities may call the application of it differently, as shores give names to the seas that wash them, which yet are indistinguishable parts of the same ocean. But we cannot say, here begins and here ends such and such a grace. They are to mend and alter our nature, and therefore mingle with it.

Dr. Ridley.

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 2.

THE VANITIES OF LIFE RENOUNCED.

I send the things of earth away; Away, ye tempters of the mind, False as the smooth deceitful sea, And empty as the whistling wind.

Your streams were floating me along Down to the gulf of black despair; And whilst I listened to your song, Your streams had near conveyed me there.

Now to the shining realms above I stretch my hands, and glance my eyes; O for the pinions of a dove, To bear me to the upper skies!

Lord, I adore thy matchless grace, That warned me from the deep abyss; That drew me from those treacherous seas, And bid me seek superior bliss.

Bogatsky.

THE SMALL VALUE OF THIS LIFE. I. TIM. CHAP. IV.

7 Refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the law that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

CHAP. VI.

7 We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

THE GRAVE, AND THE HOPE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

Wood and wild, the mountain and the dale, The house of prayer itself, no place inspires Emotions more accordant with the day, Than does the field of graves, the land of rest. Oft at the close of evening-prayer, the toll, The funeral-toll, announces solemnly The service of the tomb; the homeward crowds Divide on either hand: the pomp draws near; The choir to meet the dead go forth, and sing, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Ah me! these youthful bearers robed in white, They tell a mournful tale; some blooming friend Is gone, dead in her prime of years-'twas she, The poor man's friend, who, when she could not give, With angel-tongue pleaded to those who could; With angel-tongue and mild beseeching eye, That ne'er besought in vain, save when she prayed For longer life, with heart resigned to die-Rejoiced to die, for happy visions blessed Her voyage's last days, and hovering round, Alighted on her soul, giving presage That heaven was nigh. Oh what a burst Of rapture from her lips! what tears of joy Her heavenward eyes suffused! Those eyes are closed; Yet all her loveliness is not yet flown:

She smiled in death, and still her cold pale face Retains that smile; as when a waveless lake, In which the wintry stars all bright appear, Is sheeted by a nightly frost with ice, Still it reflects the face of heaven unchanged, Unruffled by the breeze or sweeping blast.

And he who cried to Lazarus 'Come forth!' Will, when the Sabbath of the tomb is past, Call forth the dead, and reunite the dust (Transformed and purified) to angel souls. Ecstatic hope! belief! conviction firm! How grateful 'tis to recollect the time When hope arose to faith! Faintly at first The heavenly voice is heard. Then by degrees Its music sounds perpetual in the heart. Thus he, who all the gloomy winter long Has dwelt in city crowds, wandering a-field Betimes on Sabbath morn, ere yet the spring Unfold the daisy's bud, delighted hears The first lark's note, faint yet, and short the song, Checked by the chill ungenial northern breeze; But, as the sun ascends, another springs, And still another soars on loftier wing. Till all o'er-head, the joyous choir unseen, Poised welkin-high, harmonious fills the air, As if it were a link 'tween earth and heaven.

Grahame.

# COMFORT FOR THE DYING.

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel." It was uttering words like these, and in a state of holy exultation, that the pious Simeon breathed his last. May not each of us, may not every Christian leave the world with like content? Our life is in heaven. This should teach us to seek for something infinitely more valuable than the richest treasures of earth. It opens to us a bright futurity. Where, then, is the bitterness of death, if its approach is identified with that salvation procured for us by the Saviour of man? If we lose this body, to receive in exchange a more glorious form—if we must pass through the valley of the shadow of death, to rise for ever above the fear of death and corruption, why should we weakly shrink from the sepulchre? Since such is the view opened to the expiring Christian, it becomes our duty, as rational beings, while yet health and reflection remain ours, anxiously to cherish this knowledge, and solemnly prepare for the great change which awaits us; and it were most unworthy weakness to fix on the objects which charm us here all the wishes of our hearts. We desire that this morning may give us a lively

idea of the morning of that day which shall know no end; that our minds, refreshed by sleep, may picture to us the brilliant renovation we shall experience, when possessed of that renewed life reserved for us in another world. We ought not to forget, that, small as the space is which intervenes between this morning and the evening which is to follow, that space may be still more so which separates us from the darkness of the grave. At all events, we know that but a few years can elapse, before we reach life's goal, the mere idea of which now makes us shudder. What then will be to us the gaieties we have known, the societies we have enjoyed, and all the other gratifications of this world, if we have not in our hearts the consolation of the dying Simeon? The hope of salvation can alone supply this, and that can so strengthen and uphold our spirits, that like Paul, we may wish for our latter end, and like Simeon, bless it.

Merciful Saviour! grant that this happy frame of mind may be ours! It is possible, that, in the pangs of dissolution, in the weakness of our bodies, our minds depressed by the afflictions of our mourning friends, we may forget, in that eventful moment, to raise our thoughts to thee: we therefore now earnestly implore thee, in thy all-abounding mercy, to grant us comfort and sustaining aid, in that important hour. Let our souls then have no dread of the tyrant Death. He will but emancipate us from the chains of mortality, and we shall not be his captives; it is only the judgment of an offended Deity that we have to fear. But thou, O God! beholdest our hearts: thou seest the tears which weariness of life, while we aspire to heaven, causes us to shed, and thou wilt regard us with compassion, Why then should we experience alarm? The vain pleasures we may know here can avail us nothing at the close of life, and we are sensible that we can find no relief but in the blessed hope of resurrection. If, creatures of dust, we claim a manifestation of thy goodness when we are stretched on the bed of death, grant us, then, a heart full of love and confidence, and perfect resignation to thy will. So we can feel that our souls are in thy care, we shall depart in peace. Lord Jesus! now and ever let our spirits find repose with thee!

# EVENING .- FEBRUARY 2.

#### THE SAVIOUR TO BE BOLDLY FOLLOWED.

Awake, my drowsy soul awake,
And view the threatening scene !
Legions of foes encamp around,
And treachery lurks within.

Now to the works of God awake!
Behold their Master near;
The various, arduous task pursue
With vigour and with fear.

The awful register goes on;
The account will surely come;
And opening day, or closing night,
May bear me to my doom.

Tremendous thought! how deep it strikes! Yet like a dream it flies, Till God's own voice the slumbers chase From these deluded eyes.

Bogatzky.

# THE CHRISTIAN TO IMPROVE HIMSELF IN VIRTUE.

- 3 Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
  6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.
- 7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.
- 8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel:
- 9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.
- 10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
- 11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:
- 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.
- 15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- 16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

### PERFECTION NOT TO BE DESPAIRED OF.

If we earnestly estimate the value of those things which are the objects of our anxious pursuit in this world, what do they appear? Beauty is a frail fading blossom, wealth but glittering dust, which never can satisfy the hearts of its possessors: titles and fame are but toys, which malice or misfortune often, and death invariably, take from us that others may enjoy them; if then nothing in life is so valuable as that which is based on piety and virtue, why are we ordinarily so little on the alert to secure the one thing needful?

Our own want of courage is often the cause of

our wandering from the right path. Our good intentions defeated, we pusillanimously conclude that our prayers are unheard, and that it is not in our power to do good. Consequent upon this, is the thought, that in this world it is impossible for a mere mortal to imitate the example set by our Redeemer, and live without sin. Hardened indifference succeeds to self-abandonment, and, we attempt to justify our backslidings; we shrink from attempting perfection as that which would expose us to ridicule as enthusiasts, and we accustom ourselves to think that by an occasional virtuous act, we do enough for our salvation, and are satisfied with our conduct, because we are not more vicious that our neighbours.

Even thus it is, O Christian! that thou often sinkest in the contest with the evil one, when thy love of sensual enjoyment overpowers thy devotional feelings, and the sordid cares of the world tempt thy weakness, and estrange thee from purity and truth. Oh yet awake to the reflection that our merciful Creator can pardon the sinner who repents, and thou mayest yet exclaim with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me on that day, and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing."

O Christian, be resolute. Fear not to aim at perfection, and eventually the victory over sin will be thine. He only can be classed with the truly good, who successfully strives against the evil inclinations which he finds in his nature. The supreme Judge alone is perfectly holy, and free

from all tendency to sin.

Continue then, O Christian! to pursue the path of virtue. Great is the prize for which thou strivest, nothing less than for peace here, and a happier and more exalted state of being beyond the grave. The adventurous merchant quits his wife and little ones, and seeks for wealth in foreign lands, and uncongenial climates, which if gained, he cannot long enjoy. Wilt not thou put forth equal energy, and make war on thy own failings when eternal glory is the forward reward.

Bravely advance, nor fear to aspire at imitating even the spotless virtue of Jesus. The means of securing the triumph are within thy reach, let

them not escape thee.

Fixed in thy determination to adhere to justice and piety, and devoutly craving the aid of thy Heavenly Father, even amidst worldly strife thy spirit will become more calm, more determined, and more sanctified.

To confirm thy sacred resolutions, be careful to seek the society of the good, whose example may give thee new animation, and in whose presence the blush of shame would come over thee if thou wert found wanting in faith. They, indeed, like thee, may have their weaknesses. On these thou mayest admonish them, but imitate that excellence which is to be found in them to which thou hast not yet attained.

Denied the advantages of such association, avoid the contagious example of depravity. In the edifying works of pious writers, seek a refuge from evil men. A good book may be likened to a virtuous friend. It gives us wise counsel, and the thoughts it suggests will serve to kindle new and warm feelings in our bosoms. Are both friends and books removed from thee? then, be not idle. Let thy powers be actively exerted in thy vocation, whatever it may be. Be master of thyself, and never be unjust. "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

O gracious Saviour! bright example of mortality, forsake us not. Be thy mild but serenely brave deportment also ours, that we may gain peace in life and tranquility in death, and bliss in that coming life, which thou hast made known to us is reserved for man. Then shall we feel that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor ought else can interpose between us and the love of God, as manifested in the grace of our blessed Redeemer.

But that high reward, can only be his who perseveres to the end. This our intercessor himself has told. What then ought to turn us aside from our purpose, and what but our own culpable neg-

lect can prevent our union with God?

Oh then! let us promise our merciful Parent that we will be faithful to the end. It shall be our care to strive to become perfect, and to aim at doing good, till in the course of nature, death takes us from this troubled scene, to rest with those who have gained the recompense of virtue, the splendid boon of everlasting life.

### MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE-GOD'S OMNISCIENCE.

As I was surveying the moon walking in her brightness, and taking her progress among the constellations, a thought rose in me which I believe very often perplexes and disturbs men of serious and contemplative natures. David himself fell into it in that reflection: "When I consider the heavens the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him?" In the same manner, when I considered that infinite host of stars, or, to speak

more philosophically, of suns, which were then shining upon me, with those innumerable sets of planets or worlds which were moving round their respective suns—when I still enlarged the idea, and supposed another heaven of suns and worlds rising still above this which we discovered, and these still enlightened by a superior firmament of luminaries, which are planted at so great a distance, that they may appear to the inhabitants of the former as the stars do to us—in short, while I pursued this thought, I could not but reflect on that little insignificant figure which I myself bore amidst the immensity of God's works.

I could not but look upon myself with secret horror as a being that was not worth the smallest regard of one who had so great a work under his care and superintendency. I was afraid of being overlooked amidst the immensity of nature, and lost among that infinite variety of creatures which in all probability swarm through all these immeasurable regions of

matter.

In order to recover myself from this mortifying thought, I considered that it took its rise from those narrow conceptions which we are apt to entertain of the divine nature. We ourselves cannot attend to many different objects at the same time. If we are careful to inspect some things, we must of course neglect others. This imperfection which we observe in ourselves, is an imperfection that cleaves in some degree to creatures of the highest capacities, as they are creatures; that is, beings of finite and limited natures. The presence of every created being is confined to a certain measure of space, and consequently his observation is stinted to a certain number of objects. The sphere in which we move, and act, and understand, is of a wider circumference to one creature than another, according as we rise one above another in the scale of existence. But the widest of these our spheres, has its circumference. When, therefore, we reflect on the divine nature, we are so used and accustomed to this imperfection in ourselves, that we cannot forbear in some measure ascribing it to Him in whom there is no shadow of imperfection. Our reason, indeed, assures us that his attributes are infinite; but the poorness of our conceptions is such, that it cannot forbear setting bounds to everything it contemplates, until our reason comes again to our succour, and throws down all those little prejudices which rise in us unawares, and are natural to the mind of man.

We shall, therefore, utterly extinguish this melancholy thought of our being overlooked by our Maker, in the multiplicity of his works and the infinity of those objects among which he seems to be incessantly employed, if we consider, in the first place, that he is omnipresent; and, in the second,

MORNING.—FEBRUARY 3.

that he is omniscient.

THE GOOD ARE SECURE.

Who shall inhabit in thy hill, O God of Holiness? Whom will the Lord admit to dwell So near his throne of grace?

The man that walks in pious ways,
And works with righteous hands;
That trusts his Maker's promises,
And follows his commands.

He speaks the meaning of his heart, Nor slanders with his tongue; Will scarce believe an ill report, Nor do his neighbour wrong. The wealthy sinner he contemns, Loves all that fear the Lord; And though to his own hurt he swears, Still he performs his word.

His hands disdain a golden bribe, And never gripe the poor; This man shall dwell with God on earth, And find his heaven secure.

Watts.

#### THE REWARD OF VIRTUE, PROV. XXII.

1 A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

2 The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker

3 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

4 By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour, and life.

5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

7 The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

8 He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.

9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

# THE VAST IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

If we reflect on the happiness, even here, which grows on the blessed possession of a good conscience, what on earth can we more rationally covet? Should we find it ours, we cannot be too grateful. Sad is the condition of that transgressor whose mind is disturbed through the day, and whose slumbers are broken at night, by the inward groanings of self-reproach. The joys of this world derive their greatest value from peace of mind, which, if we feel we are entitled to it, will enable us cheerfully to submit to the stroke of death. We may grasp all that, in the view of the thoughtless many, constitutes happiness; health and strength, wealth and honour, knowledge and wisdom; we may be able to revel in all the fashionable pleasures of the day; but all will be valueless to him who groans beneath the weight of soul-destroying sin. Can affluence be a blessing, if derived from the tears of the friendless widow, and unprotected orphans, while conscious iniquity dwells in the bosom? What are worldly honours to those who feel that they are rejected by God? With this mournful impression on the mind, a high and refined understanding can impart no comfort, and life itself will be a burden, if we can only look back on the past with shame, affliction, and remorse. In adversity we must ascribe our griefs to our own

sinful conduct, and in our dving moments, the hateful past, like an avenging fiend, will thrill our fainting souls with the prospect of a horrible future.

Preserve our souls from iniquity, O God! that such a melancholy condition may not be ours! Grant that we may enjoy that happy composure which a good conscience only can bestow! We can never be greatly cast down, if, with this, we have a sincere conviction that, through the merits of Christ, we have been reconciled to our Creator. Unrepining at destiny, whatever may occur, we shall be at ease, knowing that our destiny depends upon the will of the Eternal. We shall, in our happier moments, enjoy with keener zest the pleasures of this life, feeling that we have not abused them, and in the day of calamity, we shall be soothed by the reflection, that the utmost malice of our foes can never withdraw from us the more than compensating love of our gracious Lord. With this assurance, we shall rise superior to the fear of death, and the agony of the parting struggle will be comparatively easy. More blessed still, the thought, that when the Judge of all the earth comes in his glory, we, among the humble votaries of Jesus, shall be permitted to join in the joyous celebration of his final triumph.

With earnestness and sincerity, we entreat thee, O Lord! to grant that we may know this surpassing happiness! Teach us to tread in the steps of our Redeemer! Let the recollection of what he has done and suffered for us, in his painful progress through mortal life, prevent our becoming supine, or forgetful of those things on which our future happiness or everlasting woe must depend. Active in the performance of good, Oh! grant, that we may find that peace in the soothing conviction that we are the objects of our Saviour's care, which is the rich reward of a virtuous life. Vouchsafe to us the great boon of a satisfied conscience—of a conscience satisfied that in thee, we shall find a forgiving judge, through the intercession of our Lord, who suffered on Mount Calvary. Aware that we have many defects, we feel that to obtain such enviable repose. we must labour incessantly to improve ourselves, that we may not be wholly unworthy. This shall be our constant ambition; this, O Omniscient and Eternal Lord! is now our fixed resolution—our devout purpose, and solemn vow.

THE BEST SUPPORT AND CONSOLATION.

With what rich and copious matter does this scripture abound, tending to shew the absolute safety of resting upon God's promises! How strong are the arguments to persuade

the heirs of promise, to put their whole trust and confidence in the faithfulness of their God! who, having provided an infinitely glorious and everlasting inheritance for them, was willing to make it over to them in the strongest manner of conveyance, and therefore he has given them the promise and the oath of God, which cannot possibly change nor alter, that their faith might never doubt nor waver, and their hope might at all times be sure and stedfast. And, until he bring them to the inheritance itself, he has given them many sweet and blessed promises of all things needful for their temporal and spiritual estate, upon which he would have them not only to live comfortably at present, but also to receive them as part of the inheritance, allowed them for their maintenance till they come to age, and enter upon the possession of the whole. And what God intended in his promise and oath has its effects in a good degree among those who have the word of God abiding in them. They cast their anchor where he commands them. and they are not only safe, but also, in time of the greatest troubles and temptations, have strong consolation.

# EVENING.-FEBRUARY 3.

TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT.

Come, blessed spirit, source of light, Whose power and grace are unconfined, Dispel the gloomy shades of night, The thicker darkness of the mind.

To my illumined eyes display The glorious truth thy word reveals, Cause me to run the heavenly way, The book unfold, and loose the seals.

Thine inward teachings make me know The mysteries of redeeming love, The emptiness of things below, The excellence of things above.

While through this dubious maze I stray, Spread, like the sun, thy beams abroad, To show the dangers of the way, And guide my feeble steps to God.

THEY SHALL NOT FAINT WHO TRUST IN GOD. ISAIAH XL.

25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over

from my God?

28 ¶ Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no

might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young

men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not

### COMMENCEMENT OF CHRIST'S REIGN.

No war or battle's sound, Was heard the world around:

The idle spear and shield were high up hung; The hooked chariot stood

Unstain'd with hostile blood;

The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;

And kings sat still with awful eye, As if they surely knew their sov'reign lord was by.

But peaceful was the night, Wherein the Prince of Light

His reign of peace upon the earth began:

The winds, with wonder whist,

Smoothly the waters kiss'd, Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,

Who now hath quite forgot to rave,

While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars with deep amaze, Stand fixed in stedfast gaze,

Bending one way their precious influence;

And will not take their flight,

For all the morning light,

Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence; But in their glimmering orbs did glow, Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom Had given day her room,

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,

And hid his head for shame,

As his inferior flame

The new-enlighten'd world no more should need; He saw a greater sun appear

Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

Milton.

# GOD'S UNIVERSAL KINGDOM.

Our blessed Redeemer has, in the name of his Almighty Father, founded a kingdom among men, a kingdom of love and truth, of boundless joy and everlasting life, Before his advent, darkness lowered over the world. Mankind were steeped in ignorance. Even the chosen people had forgotten the pure worship of the God of their fathers, and the heathers and other nations, were abandoned to the grossest, most degrading idolatry, and to vices the most appalling. The gospel of Jesus preached, the gloom was dissipated, and the voke of slavery broken. Thousands of Jews, and of Pagans became followers of the Redeemer, and stedfastly upheld that faith which had brought new light to their understandings. They encountered fierce persecution, because it tore the mask from the face of hypocrisy, condemned vice, and advocated the cause of holy purity, humbling the spirit that it might therefore be exalted. Their foes were numerous, but victory after victory was won by the followers of Christ, and their religion is now established in every quarter of the globe.

It is, however, to be lamented that whole nations remain the slaves of miserable superstition, and the Jews still blindly deny the divine character of that glorious victim whom their fathers crucified. A large portion of the human race take their rule of faith from Mahomet, and the progress of Christianity, in foreign lands, has sometimes had to encounter difficulties which seemed insuperable, but which, by perseverance, have in the end been surmounted. Even in the Christian world, we see much to deplore. There exist fearful divisions, sinful oppression, merciless slavery, and degrading prejudices, accompanied by a scorn for justice, and a contempt for truth. even among those who profess to be Christians, and whose duty it is to evince humility, purity, and benevolence.

But, O Lord of all, who by the means of thy son, our gracious mediator before thy throne, hast introduced thy kingdom into the world we inhabit, to thee, we address our anxious supplications, at the close of this day "that thy kingdom may come." When we behold so much woe, the offspring of ignorance and sin, how grateful ought we to be, that from thy gracious favour, we are permitted to offer up our prayers to thee with the cheering assurance that they will not be unre-Oh! that the blissful day may soon arrive, when the whole of the human family shall worship thee as their common father, and manifest for each other that mutual love which ought for ever to unite brethren in Christ. Take compassion on us, on the degenerate human race, and especially on Christians who have wandered from the right path. Grant that the pure doctrine of Jesus, may overcome hateful superstition and wild delusions, and let wisdom prevail over folly, virtue over vice, that heaven may gloriously, and for ever, triumph over hell.

O God, grant to us, to all Christians, to all men, the blessing of thy holy spirit, that we may believe in thy holy word, and through thy grace lead a pure and virtuous life! We pray that thy kingdom may indeed come, not merely according to the letter, but in the true spirit of our Saviour's prayer. Grant above all things, that thy kingdom may come to our bosoms—those bosoms which covet only to be cheered, purified, and sanctified, that they may only love what is consistent with truth and virtue. We desire that noble and becoming language, may by us in all our doings be

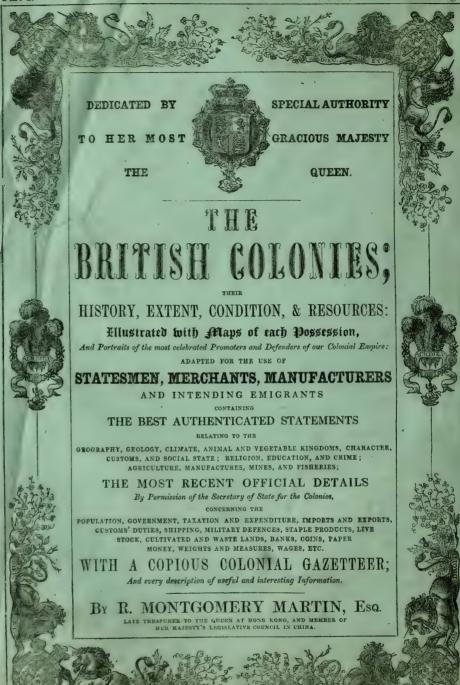


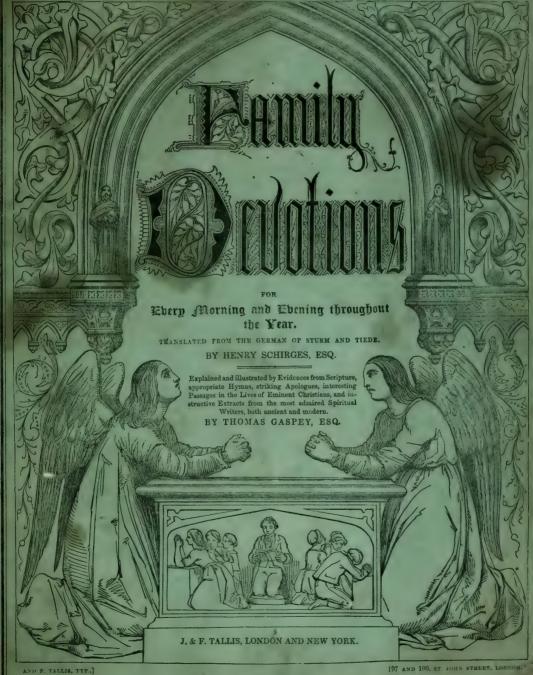
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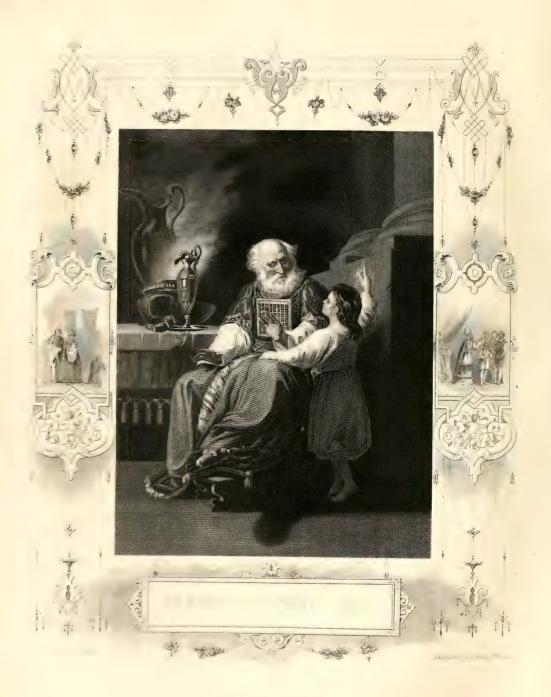
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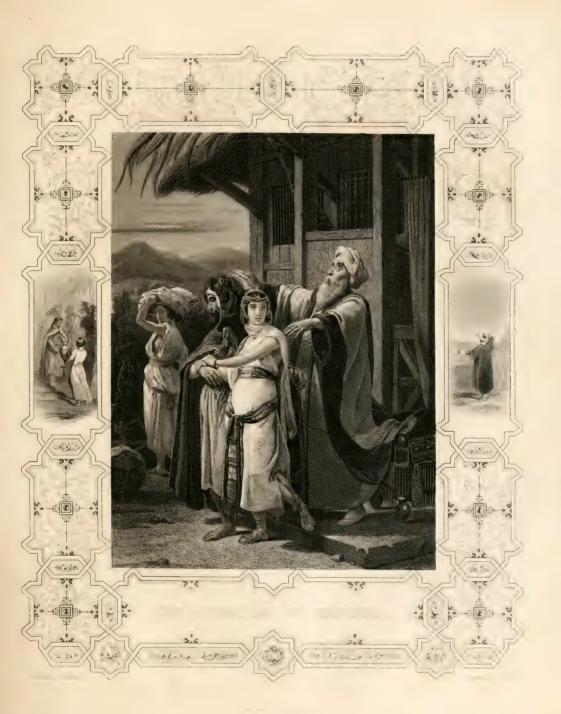














associated with useful and pious acts. Through this night we pray to experience the cheering influence of thy presence. Overshadow us with the wings of thy love. Thou art our God, our Creator and Father! If it be thy pleasure that clouds of affliction should come over us, thou also causest the vivifying sun to shine forth again, that the gloom may be no more, and that our eyes may feast on the unclouded light of thy bright eternal home. We desire, with the sincerest gratitude, to receive every gift from thy hands. The greatest blessing we can know is thy unfailing love; thy sustaining bounty, our all-sufficient protection; all beside those we know is perishable and of little account. Thou art our God! We hail, we acknowledge thee. O still be gracious to us, Eternal Father in Heaven!

# MORNING .- FEBRUARY 4.

THE WAY TO HEAVEN THROUGH THE SAVIOUR.

There is no path to heavenly bliss. Or solid joy, or lasting peace, But Christ, the appointed road : Oh, may we tread the sacred Way !-By faith rejoice, and praise, and pray, Till we sit down with God!

The types and shadows of the word Unite in Christ, the man, the Lord, The Saviour just and true; Oh, may we all his word believe! And all his promises receive, And all his precepts do.

As he above for ever lives, And Life to dying sinners gives Eternal and divine; Oh, may his spirit in me dwell! Then-saved from sin, and death, and hell-Eternal life is mine.

Rippon's Collection.

LEARN TO DO WELL. ISAIAH I.

4 Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they have gone away backward.

11 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required

this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me: the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine

eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

16 ¶ Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of

your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; 17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

### GOD'S GREATNESS SHEWN IN MAN'S IMMORTALITY.

This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life. Who would be born to such a phantom world, Where nought substantial but our misery? Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress. So soon to perish, and revive no more? The greater such a joy, the more it pains. A world so far from great (and yet how great It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it; Being a shadow; consciousness a dream; A dream how dreadful! universal blank Before it and behind! poor man a spark From non-existence struck by wrath divine, Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment sure, 'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night, His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb. If such the world, creation was a crime; For what is crime but cause of misery? Retract, blasphemer! and unriddle this, Of endless arguments, above, below, Without us, and within, the short result-If man's immortal, there's a God in heaven. But wherefore such redundancy? such waste Of argument? Truth is immortal as thy soul, and fable
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make Heaven's highest blessing, vengeance. O be wise!

Nor make a curse of immortality.

Young.

### RESOLVE TO RESIST SIN.

The path of virtue presents to feeble mortals a steep and rugged ascent, not free from danger. Sacrifices must be made, and privations experienced by the good, who must also be shocked, if happily they are not tempted by the doings of the evil. Our hearts are awake to the difficulty of the task we are required to perform, which some times appears too great for our powers, and we feel that it is next to impossible to sin in no instance against duty, to neglect no good work which claims our attention. Too frequently have we thus to bewail our own weakness, and we tremble lest we, like many others, should be induced to forsake the paths of holiness, and abandon ourselves to the vain joys of a deluding world. Yet it ought to be borne in mind, that what is reserved for us, was pronounced by our Saviour to be "a soft voke, and easy to be borne," seeing it was only to follow his example, and reverence his commands. Such being his declaration, if as yet

our resolution is not strong, if our ardour in the cause of virtue is not sufficiently animated, shall we madly abandon the attempt to become what we ought to be? The author of our being has taught us to know what is good, and inclined our hearts to honour virtue: but if they also contain a longing for the lusts and vanities of life, shall we, with recreant weakness, shrink from combating within, and be wanting in that selfdenial which marks the faithful Christian, and the good man? This our Redeemer had to do. He had to encounter temptations, and to deny himself all that his mortal nature might crave, before he could enter into his glory. Full of toil, replete with sorrow and suffering, was his career on earth, from the period of his birth, till he suffered on the cross. Shall we decline to imitate his constancy? Forbid it, Father, in mercy forbid it! that such weakness should be ours. We this day solemnly resolve, in thy awful presence, to put forth all our energies to conquer the enemy which opposes our advance towards heaven, and in every situation in life assiduously to imitate the conduct of our Saviour in this world. The pain we may this day endure, shall be borne unrepining. Nothing shall cause us to deviate from the road, during the remainder of our pilgrimage: and we will not doubt that looking up to our God, while anxiously coveting to fulfil his commands, he will support us with his grace, and strengthen us as we proceed. Suffer us not to be carried away by the contagious example of evil doers. Let the fascinating shapes which vice may assume, be displayed before us in vain, and despite of all the snares laid for our feet, grant that we may reach in safety the end of our toilsome journey. Then shall we exultingly look back on dangers past, and gratefully rejoice that through thy mercy we were enabled to find the narrow way which leads to eternal life.

For giving us resolution so to follow our great Captain, thanks to thee, O God! will be ever due! Teach us the truth, and let us not wander from it. Hear our humble and fervent supplica-

tions, Almighty Father and God.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 4.

GOD OUR SHEPHERD.

My shepherd is the living Lord; Now shall my wants be well supplied; His providence and holy word Pecone my safety and my guide. In pastures where salvation grows He makes me feed, he makes me rest; There living water gently flows, And all the food divinely blest.

Though I walk through the gloomy vale Where death and all its terrors are, My heart and hope shall never fail, For God my shepherd's with me there.

Amidst the darkness and the deeps Thou art my comfort, thou my stay; Thy staff supports my feeble steps, Thy rod directs my doubtful way.

Watts.

### SUFFERINGS OF JESUS. MATT. XXVII.

15 At that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people, a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.
17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barrabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they delivered him.

19 ¶ When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate said unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 ¶ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tunult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it.
25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be or us, and on our children.

26 ¶ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

## THE TEACHING OF CHRIST.

Our thoughts shall be fixed on the Saviour of Man. Recalling what he has done for sinful mortals, let us lift our minds above all ordinary cares, to contemplate his goodness alone. All the spiritual world confesses the power of his word. None like him ever so successfully laboured to dispel the darkness and superstition, which, through ages, had hung over the human mind. His mighty arm lifted man from the depth of degradation to his original dignity. By him we were taught to know our God. Plain sober language he spoke, so that the weakest and most ignorant might clearly understand. He bestowed intelligence on the simple, and increased the wistom of

the wise. None ever like him brought earth in contact with heaven, and reconciled erring man to his justly offended God.

To gain mercy, and renewed favour for mankind, was his glorious task, and triumphantly was it accomplished. Before or since, his equal was

never seen in the orb which we inhabit.

By him the world was reconciled to God, not God to the world. The Most High regarded his creatures with eternal love; he viewed our transgressions with merciful forbearance. In him there was no change, no passion, no wild resentment. But men were at variance with their dread sovereign. They were devoted to terrestrial rather than celestial cares, and sensual pleasures weaned them from heaven. The perishable was preferred to the imperishable; the evanescent things of time to the joys of eternity. The soul, so to speak, had withdrawn from God to bury itself in the earth. Christ came, and by his life and sufferings set our spirits free from bondage, relieved us from the overwhelming weight of our iniquities, and reconciled the emancipated spirit to heaven.

Such was the object of his coming. But the performance of his mighty task was madly opposed by that world he sought to save. All conspired to defeat his holy labours. His life was one continued struggle with a sinful generation. Still undismayed, our great Captain fought the good fight, and though earth and hell were leagued against him, obtained the victory. Rejected, and for a time, despised by all, eventually he fixed on himself the wondering gaze of the world, and in honour of that friendless one, who, less happy than the birds of the air, had no place where he could rest his head; glorious temples were destined to rise in all parts of the world; before the altar of that poor and persecuted being, whom the very rabble laughed to scorn: proud monarchs were destined, in the fulness of time, to bend their knee, and to look for renown by seeking to render honour to his name.

Christ continued his onward course. He offered himself to suffer for the salvation of man, and shrunk not from fulfilling his task. But his mission was ill understood by those he came to ransom. His own disciples even, could not comprehend his design in all its magnitude. He stood alone in the world, his eyes fixed on God, and calmly braving all the horrors of mortal dissolution. Guiltless as he was, he was judged by wicked men, and monstrously condemned. His strength, as a man, was exhausted by complicated

and continued suffering: but his spirit was unsubdued, and thus did our Redeemer advance to Golgotha, and his parting words to those who surrounded him were those of goodness and mercy, "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children."

He died on the cross, and thus was his mighty task finished, and released from the bonds of the flesh, he ascended to his native heaven, smiling on the impotent rancour of an ungrateful world.

Blessed Lord! Saviour of Mankind! We too like thee, are to pass from this to a better life—a life that will know no end. The desire to pursue the track which thou hast marked, and like thee, to fight the good fight against sin and the devil. Shall we, bending like reeds before the winter's blast, be regarded as things of chance, and compounded with the dust? Are we not immortal. fashioned for ultimate perfection, and endowed with perception and reflection to determine what is good; and is not, must not that which we know to be good be the cause, of a gracious Creator? Shall his cause be neglected for the gratification of base passions and sensual enjoyments? No! Forbid it, O God! We will strive in the cause of truth and justice, despite of all the insidious whisperings of our unhallowed desires. Creator, our Redeemer, we will acknowledge before the world, not merely by our lips, but in all our doings; our actions shall attest the sincerity and purity of our hearts: nor shall any menacing peril shake this, our firm and sacred resolution. Persevering in such a determination, at the close of life's rugged and chequered scenes, it will be ours, rejoicing to proclaim, "We have fought the good fight, we have finished our course, we have kept the faith. For us a crown of righteousness is from this time forward laid up, which the Judge of all the earth will bestow upon us at the last great day, not to us only, but to all those who love him."

#### HOW CHRIST WILL HEREAFTER APPEAR.

We shall then behold our Saviour, not in those dignities which disfigured him in their eyes, that only considered his sufferings, but in that triumphant condition, wherewith they are now rewarded. The thorns of his (now no more galling, but adorning) crown will appear upon that radiant head of his, more glorious than those of the flaming bush, wherein God appeared to Moses. And we shall not see that despicable form, which made the prophet say, (personating the generality of the Jewish nation contemporary with the Messiahs), "He hath no form, nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire." But we shall see him encompassed with so much majesty, and shinking with so much of his genuine splendour and beauty, that we shall deservedly

esteem him Nephle, the Admirable. And our ravished souls shall, by the more attentive contemplation of him, but find more cause to imitate the spouse in Solomon's mystic epithalamium; who, having dwelt upon the beauty of the several parts that concurred to the accomplishing the divine bridegroom, exclaims in an epiphonema, very contrary to the expression lately mentioned in the prophet, "He is altogether desires," or by an Hebraism, "Most desirable," which our English renders, "He is altogether lovely." His eyes will there appear, as St. John represents them, of active fire, and will into the willing breasts of the ravished beholders, shoot flames as pure, as holy, and as deathless, as those fathers of the church, who believed not the angels altogether incorporeal, may be supposed to have conceived the seraphims to consist of. Certainly, since (as the Scripture informs us), "It never entered into the heart of man, what God has reserved in heaven for those that love him." That glory can be but imperfectly expressed by the bare epithet of inconceivable, with which God rewards the meritorious sufferings and obedience of that only begotton Son of his love, for whose sake he is pleased to confer on so many thousands of men, unimaginable glories.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 5.

GOD OUR CONSTANT FRIEND.

To God the mighty Lord, Your joyful thanks repeat; To him due praise afford, As good as he is great: For God does prove Our constant friend; His boundless love Shall never end.

To him whose wondrous power All other Gods obey, Whom earthly kings adore, His grateful homage pay; For God does prove Our constant friend; His boundless love Shall never end.

He does the food supply
On which all creatures live,
To God who reigns on high,
Eternal praises give.
For God will prove
Our constant friend;
His boundless love
Shall never end.

### GOD RAISES THE FALLEN. JONAH II.

2 I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

3 For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

4 Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look

again toward thy holy temple.

5 The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

6 I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

7 When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy

temple.

8 They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.
9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of
the Lobd.

#### THE LORD IS OUR DELIVERER.

A just confidence in the goodness of God is the best reward of a pious life. It is the noblest, most soothing consolation we can know, ever to feel that we are in the hands, and under the protection of a good and all-powerful God. We should put our trust always in him. Why should we vainly place dependence on creatures as frail, as helpless as ourselves? God is our teacher, our deliverer, our guide; to him let us commend ourselves.

We know, for experience has proved it, that He is our constant protector. He knows the dangers to which our lives are exposed, and he can defend us from them all. Where mortal strength would be impotent to resist, he is all-sufficient. He will hear our dutiful supplications; he will see our tears, and he will uphold us in all our tribulations: therefore on him let our souls repose in holy tranquillity, through all our future days. While we live we must be encompassed by perils. What even this day may bring forth, no mortal can tell. To thy protection, Omnipotent Father, we appeal. When our weak nature cravesonly earthly comfort, it is thine to bestow celestial blessings, glorious and imperishable. Thou canst enable us to endure calamity with fortitude, when in sickness we crave but emancipation from mortal cares, thou wakest in our minds thoughts of heaven. Our prayers, urged with a just confidence in thy goodness, are never unheard. Oh, still disclose to us, we pray, each coming danger, and snatch us with a powerful arm from the abyss which opens to receive us. Be thou, O Lord, our instructor, and above all things, teach us that which is most important, to fear thy wrath. We are cheered by the persuasion, that we shall not implore this blessing in vain. Mould our hearts afresh, O merciful God! that all our thoughts may be purified and rendered holy. Keep our spirits blameless till the great day of thy coming. Before us are many bewildering paths that may lead us astray, but thou, in thy great compassion, wilt conduct us to the right one, that we may avoid the labyrinth in which our souls might be lost: thy wisdom and mercy will direct all our steps.

We rejoice in the knowledge of thy resistless might, and that thy grace guides us to the truth.

Regard us with kindness, O Lord! through the new day on which we have entered. Since thou hast bestowed on us the important boon of life, let thy good Providence be with us to give it increased value. Turn not away from our supplications, but grant, for the sake of thy Son our Redeemer, all that we really need. In our troubles it shall be our study to bear affliction with resignation, comforted and upheld by thee. In all things we seek but to resign ourselves to thy will, assured that thou wilt do what is most for our advantage, and what, sharp as our sufferings may be for a time, will cleanse our offending spirits, and ultimately fit them for the joy reserved for them in thy everlasting kingdom.

### GOD AIDS THE STRIVING CHRISTIAN.

For the ordinary gifts of the spirit; these he conveys to us by the mediation of our own endeavours. And as he who both makes the watch and winds up the wheels of it, may not improperly be said to be the author of its motion; so God, who first created and since sustains the power and faculties of the soul, may justly be called the cause of all those perfections and improvements which the said faculties shall attain unto by their respective operations. For that which gives the form, gives also the consequents of that form: and the principle, with all its appendant actions, is to be referred to the same donor.

But God forbid that I should determine God's title to our actions barely in his giving us the power and faculty of acting. Durandus indeed, an eminent schoolman, held so; and so must Pelagius and his followers hold too, if they will be true to, and abide by their own principles.

But, undoubtedly, God does not only give the power, but also vouchsafes an active influence and concurrence to the production of every particular action, so far as it has either a

natural or a moral goodness in it.

And therefore, in all acquired gifts or habits, such as are those of philosophy, oratory, or divinity, we are properly goverpol, "co-workers with God." And God ordinarily gives them to none, but to such as labour hard for them. They are so his gifts, that they are also our own acquisitions. His assistance and our own study are the joint and adequate cause of these perfections. And to imagine the contrary is all one, as if a man should think to be a scholar barely by his master's teaching, without his own learning. In all these cases God is ready to do his part, but not to do both his own and ours too.

Dr. South.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 5.

GOD ATTENDS TO THE SORROWS OF HIS PEOPLE.

God counts the sorrows of his saints,
Their groans affect his ears;
Thou hast a book for my complaints,
A bottle for my tears.

When to thy throne I raise my cry,
The wicked fear and flee;
So swift is prayer to reach the sky,
So near is God to me.

In thee, most holy, just, and true, I have reposed my trust;
Nor will I fear what man can do,
The offspring of the dust.

Thy solemn vows are on me, Lord,
Thou shalt receive my praise;
I'll sing, How faithful is thy word,
How righteous all thy ways!

Thou hast secured my soul from death,
O set thy prisoner free!
That heart, and hand, and life, and breath,
May be employed for thee.

Watts.

GOD'S DISPENSATIONS ALL FOR MAN'S BENEFIT.

JOB, CHAP. V.

8 I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:

9 Which doeth great things and unsearchable: marvellous things without number.

10 Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields:

11 To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

12 He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.

13 He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

14 They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night.

15 But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

17 Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

# MAN'S CHIEF DUTY TO STUDY THE WILL OF GOD.

The Law of God should be, with the true Christian, the only rule and guide for his conduct. He will undertake nothing that he is conscious can be an offence in the eyes of God, wisely and sincerely anxious, that all his actions may be in accordance with the will of his Creator. All nature announces what that will is to man; it is that which is indicative of the most illimitable power, intelligence, and goodness. The Eternal best knows what is fitting for us, and what degree

of joy or sorrow, in this state of being, we can bear. His providence, ever gracious, orders all things for our good. The sorrows we prove, are but as wholesome medicines for our diseased spirits; and, knowing this, as, if we duly reflect on all we see, we must know it, ought we not contentedly to resign ourselves to our God, as a child reposes in the arms of its parent, or the sick man turns to his physician, whose skill in the healing art has been most fully proved? Submissive to the divine will, ought we not gladly to fulfil those duties which must be carefully performed, to fit us for comfort here, and happiness in the world to come.

All-bounteous Father! "Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven!" This we make our last aspiration to thee, in the evening now drawing to its close. May those who, till now, have been misled by their own degrading passions, and who have disregarded thy commandments, be taught, ere yet it be too late, that it is only by due attention to thy laws, that earthly happiness can be found. For us, O God! correct the perverseness of our nature, and sanctify our hearts. Thy ordinances, we feel, ought ever to be observed. and the more so, as they all tend to our lasting advantage. All that thou hast withheld from us. if gained, would have proved fruitful of sorrow, and all the afflictions we have experienced, we gratefully acknowledge to have become the source of good. In all things, therefore, O God! we desire to be blessed with a disposition to conform to thy will. We often feel that we have omitted to do what we ought to have done. Desiring to adhere to duty, weak and inert, we postpone, neglect, and forget. This is most culpable. In mercy forgive us our numerous sins of omission, and, for the time to come, incline our hearts to good actions more zealously than ever, and grant us such resolution, that we may, henceforth, never slacken in the performance of duty; for of what avail is it to know what is right, if our knowledge be not identified with our actions? and what even is faith, without the visible fruits of it? A Christian without virtue is like a tree without a root. Let us, then, not only desire to do thy bidding, but actually and unceasingly attend to it, to the end that we may increase our happiness here, and fit our spirits for a better world.

Darkness now prevails. All living creatures seek rest. In thy bounty, grant that ours may be calm and refreshing to our frames, that, if permitted to see another day, we may rise to pur-

sue our several avocations, with cheerfulness and vigour, and with a confident reliance on thy continued support. For ever let it be our object to remember thy providence, and study thy ways. Be this the grand aim of our lives. Here we have but a brief space of time to remain; but the hour is approaching when we may be permitted to join the immortal host of angels which surround the throne of our God, in heaven, to sing his praises for ever. Here enable us worthily to begin the strain, which we shall continue there, and still repeating the earnest wish of our hearts, that "thy will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven," we wish to attune all our thoughts to holiness. Let thy Spirit support us, that, in all things, thy sacred behest may be our law. So shall we gain a foretaste of celestial bliss, even in this world, and we shall, from day to day, and from year to year, constantly exult in the fulness of thy bounty.

But how often, O Lord! have we forsaken thee, in our passage through life! Carried away by sinful desires, how often have our vows to thee been forgotten! How often have we broken the resolution we had formed, to tread in the footsteps of our Saviour! Again we appear before thee, this night, with new protestations of a sincere anxiety to reform our lives. Enable us to bear them in mind, and to act accordingly, that we may be cheered with the hope of ultimate salvation, through the merits of our glorious Redeemer.

### AFFLICTING VISITATIONS PRECURSORS OF BLESSEDNESS.

Our faith must be acted upon the ends and designs of Christ in all his afflictive providences towards us; and these his ends are all very good and gracious. With this argument he himself used to cure the heart trouble of his disciples for his departure from them, viz. that he had good ends in his going away from them; his end was, to prepare a place for them, a better place than any to be found here, a place in heaven, in the Father's house. And his end was to send the Spirit, the Comforter, unto them, which would not come if he did not go away, John xvi. 6, 7. He had told them of his going away from them, upon which sorrow had filled their hearts, (and it is even so with us, when our earthly comforts leave us, sorrow fills our hearts) but to cure this, our Lord answers them, that it was expedient for them, (good and necessary for them) that he should go away, shewing them his end in going away, to wit, that he might send them the Comforter; he would remove from them a great mercy; the greatest earthly mercy that they ever enjoyed, which was his personal presence; they must part with so dear and near, so sweet, so loving, so faithful a friend as himself was to them: and could there be a greater loss? for this sorrow had filled their hearts. But he tells them, it was to make way for a greater mercy, which was, to send them the Comforter, in all the saving and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which they should be able to do greater works than he himself did, John xiv. 12, which was a greater mercy than his bodily presence with them, and with this he calms and quiets their minds. Now if we can act faith

upon the blessed ends of Christ, in removing our earthly comforts from us, which are, to bestow upon us better mercies, to give us more of his spirit, and of the graces and comforts of it, our hearts would not be troubled, could we believe, that Christ's end in all his chastisements, is, to prepare us for that place in his Father's house, it would comfort and support us.

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 6.

THE ACCEPTED SACRIFICE.

O thou that hear'st when sinners cry, Though all my sins before thee lie, Behold them not with angry look, But blot their memory from thy book.

Create my nature pure within. And form my soul averse to sin. Let thy good Spirit ne'er depart, Nor hide thy presence from my heart.

I cannot live without thy light, Cast out and banished from thy sight: Thine holy joys, my God, restore, And guard me, that I fall no more.

A broken heart, my God, my king, Is all the sacrifice I bring; The God of Grace will ne'er despise A broken heart for sacrifice.

Watts.

MAN CONNECTED WITH GOD BY THE REDEEMER. JOHN, CHAP. X.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers;

but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his

life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth

not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

# THE COMMUNION BETWEEN GOD AND THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIPPER.

Wonderful and incomprehensible is the communion between God and his faithful worshipper, and not less wonderful its effects. To the profli-

gate and the scoffer, living in God is but an empty sound, which is made the subject of foolish derision, but to the good, it is pregnant with the richest consolation, for theirs is the promise, "Place thy delight in the Lord, and he will give thee what thy heart wishes." The reliance of the pious, on God's word, and the firmness of their courage, are gained by faith. It can only be acquired by a hard contest with sin, by much selfdenial; it can only be preserved by constant prayer. We cannot grasp the Deity with our hands, but devotion conveys his image to our hearts. What, but his word, could uphold us in this scene of strife? For that gift, we ought to tender to the Almighty our sincerest gratitude. We see how the world, and all that is most dazzling and superb, is in the constant course of fading; but the word of our God endures for ever, and therefore, we trust in him. When grief assails us, we should look from this globe to the city of God, that our souls may not be perilled by overwhelmed disaster, or too much excited by unlooked for success. Withdraw not thy word from us, O Lord! Encourage us to observe thy commandments, and enable us to appreciate the truth. Let thy good Spirit be constantly with us, and grant that we may eventually reach that heaven, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. Our souls exult in the exalted hopes which we derive from faith!

Pilgrims and wanderers here, temptations often lead us into crooked paths, and render us forgetful of duty. Come thou, O Lord, to our aid! Let thy word enlighten our darkness, and guide us in the way to everlasting life! We cannot but lament, that many unhappy mortals wake this morning, who long for thy word, but yet are denied its refreshing influence. Have mercy upon them, all bountiful Father! and let thy light dissipate the gloom beneath which they languish! Punish not the scoffers, according to thy justice, but spare them in thy mercy! Let the seeds of holiness be planted in their hearts, and be graciously pleased to work their amendment. Have compassion upon them: they know not what they do. Still we fondly hope they will acknowledge and understand all the importance of a Saviour's love. But say-what mournful cry is that? They raise their voices, in penitence and grief, to thee, O Lord! To thee, from the depths of their sufferings, they cry aloud, Give ear to their late supplications, and grant them remission of their sins, O merciful Creator of the universe!

And to us also, extend thy gracious indulgence! Let not thy anger, though long provoked, fall upon us. The privilege of listening to thy word has long been ours, yet we have profited by it infinitely less than we ought to have done. ought to have been wiser; we ought to have been more pure. Oh! enter not into judgment with us, but let thy pity afford us another day, a day for repentance. Dispose our hearts to receive thy word, and especially, in our final hour, when the death-damp hangs upon our brows, let that word which we have too much neglected, be our stay and our hope, that we may cheerfully depart. Accept our prayers, and grant us thy blessing. Enable us to confide in thy promises. We do trust in them, and are consoled. Thy weak and ignorant children thou wilt not leave without needful instruction and due support. Thou wilt still impart thy comfort.—Of this it were idle to doubt, for thou art a God of goodness and of love.

### DEPENDANCE ON CHRIST.

A lively dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ implies an intimate and most interesting connexion between him and the soul; a knowledge of him, affecting to the heart, and full of influence; an application to him, daily and persevering. So that a man, who is living in such dependance on the Son of God, might as reasonably call in question the reality of transactions passing between himself and his friends on earth, as whether he is indeed a believer on Jesus. Venn.

A Judas may have the sop—the outward privileges of baptism, the Lord's supper, church-membership, &c.; but, like John, to lean on Christ's bosom, is the gospel ordinance posture, in which we should hear, pray, and perform all duties.

Nothing but lying on Christ's bosom, will dissolve hardness of heart, and make thee mourn kindly for sin, and humble thee indeed, and make thy soul cordial to Christ; yea, transform the ugliest piece of hell into the image and glory of Christ.

Looking at the natural sun, weakens the eye; but the more you look at Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, the stronger and clearer will the eye of faith be. Look but on Christ, and you will love him, and live on him.

See Christ, and you see all. Keep your eye steadily fixed on his blood and righteousness; and only look at your graces in the second place. Else, every blast of temptation will shake you.

If you would so see the sinfulness of sin, as to loathe it, and mourn for it; do not stand looking upon sin, but first look upon Christ as suffering and satisfying.

A Christian seldom wants comfort, but by breaking the order and method of the gospel; (i. e.) by looking upon his own righteousness, instead of looking off to the perfect righteousness of Christ; what is this, but choosing rather to live by candle-light, than by the light of the sun? Wilcox.

#### MAN TO BE SAVED.

Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and enthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe.

Milton

# EVENING.-FEBRUARY 6.

#### GOD'S GLORY.

Let all the just to God with joy
Their cheerful voices raise:
For well the righteous it becomes
To sing glad songs of praise.

Let harps, and psalteries, and lutes, In joyful concert meet, And new-made songs of loud applause The harmony complete.

For faithful is the word of God,
His works with truth abound;
He justice loves, and all the earth
Is with his goodness crowned.

#### GOD GLORIFIED IN HIS WORKS. PSALM CIV.

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters! who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming

5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.
6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the

waters flood above the mountains.
7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they

hasted away.

8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the

vallies unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that

they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

20 Thou makest darkness, that it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.

21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God,

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

24 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

31 The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.

# ETERNITY REVEALED BY THE STARS OF HEAVEN.

The beauty of the day is departed, the landscape fades on the eye, the city, the village fields and mountains, are veiled from us by darkness the most profound: silence prevails, and all creation seeks repose. Now, when the world seems to have expired, and to rest, like a corpse in its sepulchre, let night exalt our thoughts, and from the countless stars which shine for ever in the illimitable sky, may the truth of God's glory beam on our minds. We see no more of the earth which we inhabit, we look but on worlds which we cannot approach. We feel our own insignificance when we contemplate the vast magnificence of creation, yet at the same moment, we are exalted by the thought that we are permitted to adore the mighty author of all we behold, and especially do we exult in the favour we have known, remembering that his Son was sent to this world for our salvation.

Death is imaged to us by night; sleep, death's brother, clasps us in his embrace, our limbs crave rest, and we gaze no more on the charms of the world. The earth is deprived of all its wonted splendour, and the shining heaven alone meets our eye; so when death shall drop his veil over our mortal eyes, and this life has faded into an eternal night, then, in like manner, we shall find heaven open to our view the dazzling prospect

of a glorious eternity.

Wisely have all these things been regulated. We are not idly admonished by the return of night to our world, of the coming moment, when terrestrial objects must be withdrawn from our gaze. The stars shine not on us in vain. They remind us of the lights of the everlasting world, and of a future existence. They at once proclaim the majesty of the Creator, and his goodness to man.

The half of our existence is day, in which we can give our attention to the necessary occupations of life, but the other half is night, and radiant worlds on which we can only gaze with wonder, admiration, and reverential awe, seem to say, "Look up to us. Ye belong not only to the earth, but may claim a home in heaven. Composed of body and soul, thy time consisting of day and night, half of thee only is native of yonder world, the other portion of thy being belongs to eternity. For earth then, O man, forget not thy interest in heaven!"

But carelessly, and unobservant of its magnificence, do weak insensible mortals often walk beneath the star-spangled sky, without feeling their minds lifted to contemplate the sublime splendour of the Creator. They heed not the witnesses of eternity, which speak to them in language so impressive. At most they but regard the glistening fires above, with childish admiration, if they do but gaze on them with the apathy with which the brute moves among the wonders of creation.

Let not this be the case with the sincere disci-

ples of Jesus; never let us look on objects so glorious without turning our thoughts to eternity—without paying homage to the omnipresence of God.

O Mighty Deity! what an immensity of life and light, and eternity, is opened to our comprehension. "When we consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him."

Can those millions of worlds have remained unpeopled? Can God have called them into existence without an object? Can this globe. one of the smallest of the planets, an atom in the infinity of the universe, solely enjoy the distinction of being the abode of rational beings, who are able to adore their Creator? Can he, who on our earth, peoples the smallest blade of grass with various creatures, suffer the larger orbs in our system to remain unoccupied? No, this cannot be the only place inhabited by rational beings. Other mortals, possibly far more perfect, more noble than men, are the inhabitants of the planets we behold, who also belong to the vast family of the Father of all, and render him more worthy homage than we can do. How grand the thought! How vast the idea! O let us feel that the sublime objects we contemplate, call upon us, as it were. with one voice, to "be perfect, as our father in heaven is perfect."

O Good Supreme! this night with devout humility we bend before thee, great Creator of all things, whom millions of worlds, and countless seraphs worship! Merciful God! thou art our Father! In that hallowed word we find something heavenly, which we have not always felt, rich in consolatory assurance and peace. Father, "thou art in heaven, and thy name is hallowed" in thousands and thousands of worlds—"thy kingdom is already come" to our earth, and with it, blessings

extending to all eternity.

O yes! when night with her splendour veils the more dazzling beams of the sun, and other suns and worlds shine on us, then let us ever feel with holy reverence, the vastness of thy majesty and power.

Yonder stars announce thy greatness; they are the prophets the representatives and revelations of eternity, whither they summon their mortal observers. Possibly we have already looked upon that world, in which it will be ours hereafter to dwell, where spirits already emancipated, even now, taste celestial bliss. They covet not to return to this state of being. Perhaps they scarcely distinguish this globe as a mere speck on the widely extended starry plain beneath their feet, hardly knowing that in that speck, they for a lengthened period resided, or that here affectionate hearts still turn to them with fond yearnings of recollected love.

But let us urge no further these daring thoughts. Soaring from star to star to infinity, the thought of eternity wakes in our bosoms a delightful glow, which we must not too unrestrainedly in-These matters are almost too vast for mortal minds. Let us address ourselves to prayer in the solitude of our chambers, and prostrate ourselves before the living God.

#### LIVELY VIEW OF IMMORTALITY IN DEATH.

Some things said by the same Mr. Thomas Cole, on his death-bed.

"Many plead for those opinions and notions, upon which they would be loath to venture their souls in a dying hour. I value more the judgment of a dying saint, about justification, than all the wrangling disputes of learned men.

"It would be miserable dying, if we had not something, every way adequate to the demands of the law, to ground our hopes of eternal life upon. We have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God, by the way of Christ's righteousness. The devil, and the law, may meet us; yet cannot hinder us from entering into heaven by that righteousness.

"Christ can defend his own truths, when his poor creatures and ministers, who contended for them as well as they could,

are laid in the silent dust

"I wait for a peaceable dismission. I long to see his salvation. The spirit saith, come; and the bride said, come. Come, O come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!

"My desire is, that God would do his own will, and glorify his own name, by my life or death; which is the best disposal of me, that God himself can make."

When rising, he said, "To rise for a little time, is but a sorry rising: but to rise so, as never to go to bed more, is a glorious resurrection. Then we shall be forever with the Lord.

"How soon is nature overset by the God of nature, if the God of Grace does not stand by to support it! A finite creature could not endure, if the everlasting arms were not

"Though they would not suffer me to preach the gospel of free grace quietly; yet God suffers me to die in the comfort

"As for my going, God can make it no loss to you. God can take off and set on his own workmen, when he pleases.

"I have done with all other satisfaction, but what God in Christ can give

"We live but dying lives in the body. They are but short recoveries which we have at any time, until mortality is swallowed up of life."

When he was removed to the other side of the bed, he said, "This is but turning from one side to another: but I would fain turn from the dark side to the light side. One turn more, and then I shall be at rest."

Toplady.

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 7.

#### THE HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Blest is the man who shuns the place Where sinners love to meet: Who fears to tread their wicked ways, And hates the scoffer's seat.

But in the statutes of the Lord. Has placed his chief delight: By day he reads or hears the word, And meditates by night.

Green as the leaf, and ever fair Shall his profession shine; While fruits of holiness appear Like clusters on the vine.

Not so the impious and unjust: What vain designs they form! Their hopes are blown away like dust, And chaff before the storm.

Watts.

### GOD'S PROMISES TO THE GOOD. ISAIAH LV.

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul de-

light itself in fatness,

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you; even the sure mercies of David.

6 ¶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8 ¶ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are

your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

#### THE GREATNESS OF GOD SHEWN IN HIS WORKS.

While the universal creation, in all its wonderful varieties, glorifies the great Creator, shall our hearts alone, dull, thankless, and indolent, forget to hymn his praise? O, let it not be! but let us

awaken our souls, worthily to celebrate the munificence of our immortal benefactor. We ought to acknowledge that goodness which protected us while we slept, that defended us in the hours of darkness from the approach of danger. We rested unconsciously in a state which resembled that of death, but the reality was, by his powerful arm, kept from us. In so mighty a guardian, we ought, under all circumstances, to feel the most perfect confidence. We shrink within ourselves. we shudder when we reflect what might be our present condition, had we been permitted to wake no more. Thy forbearance, O Lord, which transcends all praise, we gratefully and reverentially acknowledge. As no created being has more cause for thankfulness than we have, none ought to be more awake to thy bounty. What words can appropriately acknowledge it? Our capacity is unequal to the joyous task, but we will join to laud thy name, so long as we have tongues to give utterance to our thoughts; so long as we live.

But vain will be the resolution, useless our best efforts, if we are not assisted by thy grace. We can anticipate that the cares and pleasures of this day, will interrupt those meditations to which we would fain devote our every moment, and our every thought. In the next hour it is all too probable that our hearts will become cold and forgetful of thy mercies. Should deplorable weakness so far come over us, O deign to lend thy aid, and rouse our souls, that they may start from sin-

ful insensibility.

Grant that we may duly feel every moment conceded to us here is a new testimonial of thy love. Let us duly appreciate the countless obligations imposed upon us by thy goodness, and exert our best powers to glorify thy holy name. Thy boundless love has cheered our drooping hearts: O may it lead us devoutly to adore, and may we glow with sacred ardour to live and die in the faith of our blessed Redeemer!

Great, O Lord! will be the blessings of this day, if we are enabled to pass through it in conformity with our present resolution, anxiously to obtain the high approbation of our God. Then will all disappointments, pains, and mortifications, which we may encounter, seem of little moment, while we rejoice in the conviction that thou lookest down with favour upon us as our father and our friend. The troubles of life will no longer give us concern: and with what delight shall we learn to contemplate the ineffable felicity reserved for us in a future state! From this blessed

thought, we desire never to part. O Lord! it shall ever be our most anxious care, our proudest ambition, to render ourselves acceptable in thy sight. Still as we proceed on life's toilsome journey, let us feel more and more deeply impressed with the conviction, that thy grace alone can give us that peace of mind "which passeth all understanding." Under this impression we shall act with consistent dignity, despising the trivial pleasures of the thoughtless world, only solicitous to secure those which are inseparable from communion with Christ. In life or in death, O may it be ours, superior to all considerations of the moment, to glorify thee, our Father and our God; now, henceforth, and for evermore.

FARTHLY OBJECTS SHOULD TURN OUR THOUGHTS TO IMMORTAL GLORY.

Cry out in the language of inspiration. This one thing have I desired of the Lord, which, with incessant earnestness I will require; that I may dwell in the celestial house of the Lord all the days of my future life; to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to contemplate with wonder and adoration—with unspeakable and everlasting rapture—all the attributes of the

incomprehensible Godhead.

Solomon, a most penetrating judge of human nature, knowing how highly mankind is charmed with the fine qualities of flowers, has figured out the blessed Jesus, that "fairest among ten thousand," by these lovely representatives. He styles him the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys; like the first, full of delights and communicable graces; like the last, exalted in majesty, and complete in beauty.-In that sacred pastoral he ranges the creation, borrows its most finished forms, and dips his pencil in its choicest dies, to present us with a sketch of the amiableness of his person. His amiableness who is the light of the world; the glory of his church; the only hope, the sovereign consolation of sinners; and exalted, infinitely exalted, not only above the sublimest comparison, but even "above all blessing and praise."-May I also make the same heavenly use of all sublunary enjoyments! Whatever is pleasurable or charming below, let it raise my desire to those delectable objects which are above; which will yield, not partial, but perfect felicity; not transient, but never-ending satisfaction and joy .- Yes, my soul, let these beauties in miniature always remind thee of that glorious person, in whom "dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily." Let these little emanations teach thee to thirst after the eternal fountain. O! may the creatures be thy constant clue to the Creator! for this is a certain truth, and deserves thy frequent recollection, demands thy most attentive consideration; that the whole compass of finite perfection is only a faint ray, shot from that immense source-is only a small drop, derived from that inexhaustible ocean of good.

Hervey.

# EVENING.-FEBRUARY 7.

THANKS FOR DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL.

To God your grateful voices raise, Who does your daily patron prove; And let your never-ceasing praise Attend on his cternal love. Let those give thanks whom he from bands Of proud oppressing foes released; And brought them back from distant lands, From north, and south, and west, and east.

Through lonely desert-ways they went, Nor could a peopled city find; Till quite with thirst and hunger spent, Their fainting souls within them pined.

Then soon to God's indulgent ear
Did they their mournful cry address;
Who graciously vouchsafed to hear,
And freed them from their deep distress.

Watts.

MAN SAVED BY GOD'S GRACE. ROMANS, CHAP. III.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.

#### RELIANCE ON CHRIST.

While the Saviour was the companion of his disciples on earth, and they were witnesses of his wisdom, and his love, and of his matchless piety, while they were comforted by his soothing words, and elevated by his divine instruction, could it have been imagined that men by whom he was so well known, and so justly prized, would for a moment abandon him? Such defection were hard to conceive: but when the night of terror came, and the Redeemer, pursued as a criminal, suffered like one, between two violators of human laws, on Mount Caivary, and it was deemed a reproach to be connected with him, then, indeed, it might not have moved our wonder, had they forsaken their Master; but they continued faithful to him, in the midst of the obloquy and suffer-

ing which overwhelmed their glorious preceptor. For a moment, indeed, Peter was wanting in resolution, but his weakness was promptly expiated by bitter tears. All firmly resolved to follow their Lord, and soon their drooping spirits were cheered by seeing him they had loved and honoured, rise before them, victorious over death.

Then did persecution lose its terrors, and they waited to suffer in his cause; to die for him was sweet. This enthusiasm was perfectly natural. Men ordinarily turn with increased fondness to that which is withdrawn from them. Round one dear departed object, how constantly will the most tender reminiscences of our lives be found to rally! Every object touched by that being is hallowed, every recollected word treasured up, and, looking towards that heaven to which our vanished friend has passed, we feel our own souls ennobled and exalted.

We would fain be followers of that Jesus whose name we bear. The light of his revelations has reached us, and we feel that for us, his blood was shed.

Fain would we prove that he is loved by us, as we were loved by him, for experience has taught our hearts that in him alone can salvation be found—that there is no true felicity to be attained but through him.

The plans we have formed for promoting our own happiness, have been repeatedly overthrown by unlooked-for circumstances. It was only when our attention was solely fixed upon him, and expecting nothing from the world, that unlooked-for benefits were realised; blissful peace then became ours, and dangers vanished like the images of a dream. Our hearts have been affectionately attached to friends, with whom we expected to share the purest enjoyment known on earth. Experience, painful experience, taught us how vain the hope. How different was the love of Jesus! That never failed, but led us directly to the only friend or man, our gracious God. Here we met with no disappointment; each succeeding day served but to bring us renewed proofs of his love.

In him—in Jesus, will we evermore stand firm. We will, we must love him, for nothing have we found so perfect, so satisfactory, and exalting, as the divine truths which it was his to impart. The school of ancient sages, famed through many centuries, we have in vain applied to for any thing more substantial and sublime than what Jesus taught. Dark and mysterious subtleties were the only answer. We have inquired if they could

reveal any thing more grand of the history of the universe, and of the nature of eternity. They could only confirm what he had proclaimed. We sought from them to learn the road to happiness, but the answer was unsatisfactory. Could they impart more comfort, in life or in death, than we gain from Jesus Christ? we then demanded, and we were not more successful. Then were our impressions of the goodness and greatness of Jesus firmly established and fortified, and we felt that to know Christ was better than all other knowledge; that we have clearly proved, for that has sustained us when we were sinking beneath a load of despair. He gave us courage and fortitude in the hour of affliction, taught us to understand the emptiness of this life, the insignificance of wealth and beauty; the evanescent character of mortal happiness, and the debility of our own minds; he, and he alone, gave us that which could permanently cheer and uphold; and he, by a look to the Eternal Lord of all, pointing to another life in a better world, changed the darkness in which we sighed, into a paradise of celestial joy.

Blessed, thrice blessed, O my Redeemer! are those who live in thee; most blessed those to whom it is permitted to die in thee! To thee we will be faithful to the end, that a crown of ever-

lasting glory may be ours.

# THE DISCIPLES GRADUALLY ENLIGHTENED.

It is certain, that after the resurrection of Christ, and the days of Pentecost, the apostles by degrees had more divine light let into their souls by the Holy Spirit, whereby they arrived at a fuller knowledge of the glory of his person and his godhead; yet it is very probable that the idea which I have before described, is the highest they attained in his life-time; and that not only on the account of the arguments I have used already, but because this notion was so fixed and rooted in their minds, that they generally described our Lord Jesus Christ in this manner, in all their first ministrations of the gospel, and they thought it proper to teach others in the same manner as they had learned. So Peter tells the men of Israel, "Jesus of Nazareth" was "a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know;" and again, "whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death."

Further, "The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up," &c. And he cites Moses to shew what he was. "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me." So when he preached to Cornelius a Roman, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the

devil; for God was with him," &c.

And Paul himself preached Christ under this inferior character at first, though he came not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles in knowledge. In his sermon at Athens, he says, "God hath appointed a day, in the which he

will judge the world in rightcousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Thus they began with the human nature and the offices of Christ, and the peculiar assisting presence of God with him, before they taught anything of the mystery of his own godhead or personal union with the divine nature.

Watts.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 8.

SING THE PRAISE OF GOD.

O render thanks, and bless the Lord! Invoke his sacred name; Acquaint the nations with his deeds; His matchless deeds proclaim.

Sing to his praise in lofty hymns, His wondrous works rehearse: Make them the the theme of your discourse, And subject of your verse.

Rejoice in his almighty name, Alone to be adored; And let your hearts o'erflow with joy, That humbly seek the Lord.

Seek ye the Lord, his saving strength Devoutly still implore; And where he's ever present, seek His face for evermore.

Watts.

# SINGING GOD'S PRAISE IN ISRAEL. I. CHRON. XV.

16 And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.

17 So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah;

18 And with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obededom, and Jeiel, the porters.

19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass;

20 And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on Alamoth;

21 And Mattithiah and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obededom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith to excel.

22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful.

23 And Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark.

24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and Obededom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.

25 ¶ So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of

the Lord out of the house of Obededom with joy.

26 And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites

that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.

27 And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: David also had upon him an ephod of linen.

28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

#### GOD MADE THE FRIEND OF MAN BY THE SAVIOUR.

In human friendship, mixed with the delights of social love, which mitigate the pains we have to encounter, as we pass through the world, from the enmity of others, some unpleasant sensations are experienced, even where we repose with most confidence, which ceaselessly remind us that perfection is not to be found on earth. The most solemn engagements are often recklessly trampled upon, or negligently forgotten; true affection is rare; and, where we find it, we sigh in vain to render those we love happy, and death threatens to dissolve our dearest, most cherished connexions. How soothing is it to feel, while the friendships of earth are so frail, that we have one friend, whose constancy can never be shaken, whose power is boundless, and who lives for ever!

Yet it is our happiness, O God! to boast such a friend in thee. Yes, we, who are sinners, unworthy of thy notice, dare yet presume to call our God our friend, from the privileges given to us, as God's children, by the working out of our redemption, thanks to the mercy and compassion of Jesus Christ!

To thee, O God! will we turn, when worldly friends fall off. Thy love alone will be more than sufficient to compensate us for the loss of the world's esteem. Grant us that love to which. through the merits of our Redeemer, we have a claim, and we, with all our souls, will seek to do homage to thy name, for thy goodness. Oh! what a glorious example of benevolence do we find in thee! We desire to fashion our own minds in accordance with it, and with that compassion which thy Son evinced for erring man, while on earth. None ever like him, both by precept and example, so powerfully enforced the beauty of that undefiled love, which may assimilate us to thee. and entitle us to the choicest blesssings which it is thine to bestow.

He incessantly went about doing good. Nor night, nor tempests, nor the malice of men arrayed against him, could turn him from his glorious course. The sufferings and the humiliations to which he was subjected, were great in the extreme; but love and charity prevailed over all. When, when did man possess such a friend and benefactor as he was?

Blessed Saviour! condescend to warm our hearts, and animate our souls, that we may regard our fellow-mortals with that charity which by thee was ever manifested for the unhappy, and to suffer as calmly, with as much resignation, as thou didst the miserable visitation reserved for thee. With such feelings, we shall think little of the sorrows of life, assured of thy unfailing favour. We shall feel assured, from comforting the afflicted, that thou, our friend, wilt be with us in the day of sorrow; and through thy merits and sufferings, we shall eventually be admitted to felicity in heaven; gaining salvation through thy mighty sacrifice, thy love will be our joy, through all eternity.

### GOD'S CONSTANTLY RENEWED BOUNTY.

The gospel consecrates to holy uses, even what the light of nature teacheth us; as that God is our creator, who at the beginning called us into existence by his power, and made us what we are; that he is our preserver, who by a perpetual influence supports us, and prevents our falling back into nonentity; that it is his providence, which governs all the whole universe, particularly watches over us, and furnishes whatever his goodness and wisdom judge needful for us. What can more forcibly incline us to a practice of obedience than these important truths, if well considered? For what obligations have we to God, since he is our creator, who gave us life and being! Ought not we to devote all to him, from whom we received all? And if we owe him all, should not we be monsters rather than men to dishonour his creation, to insult his bounty, to rebel against his laws, and to have his glory always before our eyes? But, perhaps, creation may appear to you a distant benefit, which must needs have lost much of its value, by the great number of ages which have expired from the beginning of the world till now; or perhaps by the many years which have passed since your birth. Surely, were this the case, a favour, which bestowed on us all we are, and all we have, however long since it was conferred, ought not to be forgotten on that account. But this is not true, for he, who created man at the beginning, he who brought us into being, he it is, who still preserves us; and whose influence is still necessary to our existence: should he suspend it but one moment, we should be no more. Every day, every moment, then, does God renew the favour, or to speak more properly, every day, every moment, he increases the number of his favours. David, speaking of the Messiah, says, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth, from the womb of the morning.' And in another place, on a different subject, "Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night sheweth knowledge." But we may say of God's wonderful preservation of us, that our life, our motion, our being, come every morning, not from the womb of the morning, but from the immortal sources of the goodness and power of God.

Claude.

# EVENING .- FEBRUARY 8.

PARDON AND DIRECTION IMPLORED.

I lift my soul to God, My trust is in his name; Let not my foes that seek my blood, Still triumph in my shame.

Sin, and the powers of hell, Persuade me to despair; Lord, make me know thy cov'nant well. That I may 'scape the snare.

From the first dawning light Till the dark evening rise, For thy salvation, Lord, I wait With ever-longing eyes.

Remember all thy grace, And lead me in thy truth; Forgive the sins of riper days, And follies of my youth.

The Lord is just and kind, The meek shall learn his ways, And every humble sinner find The methods of his grace.

For his own goodness sake He saves my soul from shame ; He pardons (though my guilt be great) Through my Redeemer's name.

Watts.

#### THE LORD REIGNS. I CHRON. XVI.

23 Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day, his salvation.

24 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he

also is to be feared above all gods. 26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD

made the heavens. 27 Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and

gladness are in his place. 28 Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give

unto the LORD glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name : bring an offering, and come before him; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

30 Fear before him, all the earth; the world also shall be

stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.

32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth. 34 Oh give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his

mercy endureth for ever.

35 And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glorify in thy praise.

36 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said Amen, and praised the LORD.

#### THEMES OF GRATITUDE.

Eternal Creator and Father of mankind, condescend to look upon us with encouraging favour, while this evening we desire to offer, as a sacrifice most acceptable to thee, the homage of humble, Those hearts be contrite, and grateful hearts. pleased to regulate, that they may be filled with

wisdom and pious aspirations.

We desire to be born again, for natural life seems valueless to us without one of spiritual enjoyment. Grant that the impressions made upon us this day, may remain ours, to give all our actions a proper direction through the whole of our future life. Two paths are before us; bloated vanity and insidious vice would fain seduce us to follow the one, but virtue and Jesus unite their voices to persuade us to follow the other. To them grant that we may lend an attentive ear, and spurn vice, however seductive, from a sincere admiration for virtue. But what can we accomplish without aid from above? Nothing. Yet on the important choice we have to make, the whole of our future being, here and hereafter, must depend. Oh, then, in mercy incline us to the right!

For all the blessings we have known, Almighty Father, accept our humblest acknowledgments. The life which thy goodness bestowed, thy continued protection has preserved amidst many dangers, which threatened our helpless infancy and incautious adolescence. While many of our younger companions, in the bloom of youth, have sunk into the tomb, our lives have been graciously spared. How shall we worthily prove our thankfulness to thee, and our earthly parents for the education we have received, and for all their watchings and cares for us from time

Bless, O Lord, our kind parents and instructors. Through them we have been taught to know thy word, and their wise admonitions and virtuous example, have drawn us from the paths of vice. They have fulfilled their duty, and should we not be united with them in glory, ours must be the blame. But let not that come to pass. In the plenitude of thy unbounded love, grant us the felicity of eventually standing before thy throne, to rejoice in our salvation through faith in the Saviour of man, Jesus Christ.

Fountain of all goodness! in thy infinite wisdom thou hast been pleased to bestow upon each of us powers and capacities independent of each other, that we may employ for our own benefit,

and that of our fellow-creatures, thus preparing ourselves for thy divine presence. Merciful Father. grant that all our actions may be so regulated as to find favour in thy sight. It is thy good pleasure that our lives shall not be passed in idleness. that our powers shall not be wasted on frivolous objects: but that we should occupy ourselves in doing good, that one day we may render a satisfactory account of our proceedings to our Lord and Master. Grant that we, abandoning ourselves to the pleasures of life, may not forget to perform those exercises which may win thy gracious approbation. Enable us constantly to lift our thoughts to the contemplation of a better world, where we may rest from our labours, and enter upon a celestial and eternal career.

Gracious God! creator of the universe, even now the great design of thy mighty work comes over our minds from thy awful sanctuary. We feel thy greatness. Thou art alone all holiness and glory. Our dazzled eyes vainly sought, in the fugitive objects of earth, for good which should prove imperishable; love, friendship, fortune, and honour, promised bliss supreme. The folly, the weakness of our minds in entertaining the idea is now confessed, and we see before us the goal to which, as rational beings, we ought eagerly to press forward.

Shall we, for the evanescent joys of this life, risk the loss of our immortal souls? No, we will seek that happiness which Christ has promised; all our thoughts shall be turned towards his kingdom, a kingdom not of this world, but one where everlasting bliss is reserved for the "spirits of the just made perfect."

#### RELIGION PROMOTES TRUE PLEASURE.

Religion hath a natural efficacy in promoting the interest of pleasure, teaching a man a cheerful liberal use of the things he enjoys; how to make his soul enjoy good in his labours; how to sweeten and allay all the difficulties and troubles of this life. Nor doth it restrain men from any such sensible pleasures, as are agreeable to reason, or our true interests. It only prohibits mistakes and excesses about them, teaches us so to regulate ourselves in the use of them, that they may truly deserve the name of pleasure; how to provide against that natural emptiness and vanity, which there is in all such things, whereby they are apt quickly to satiate and weary us; and upon this account it may be said to promote rather than hinder the interest of pleasure.

As for the pleasures of the appetite, these abide no longer than till the necessities and conveniences of nature are satisfied; and so far religion doth allow of them. When our hunger and thirst is well appeased, all that follows after is but a faint kind of pleasure, if it be not rather to be styled satiety and a budge.

As for those kind of things, which we call by the name of sports and diversions, religion doth likewise admit of a

moderate use of these; and what is beyond such a moderate use, doth rather tire men, than recreate them: it being as much the property of such things, to a weary man when he is once sufficiently refreshed by them, as it is to refresh him when he is wearied by other things.

We read, indeed, of the pleasures of sin; but besides that, they are of a baser and grosser kind, 'tis said also, that they are but for a season, but for a moment, and the end of them

is heaviness.

Principles and Duties of Natural Religion.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 9.

#### CONFIRMATION HYMN.

Lord, shall thy children come to thee?

A boon of love divine we seek;

Brought to thine arms in infancy,

Ere heart could feel, or tongue could speak;

Thy children pray for grace, that they

May come themselves to thee to-day.

Lord, shall we come? and come again?
Oft as we see yon table spread,
And—tokens of thy dying pain—
The wine poured out, the broken bread,
Bless, bless, O Lord, thy children's prayer,
That they may come, and find thee there.

Lord, shall we come? not thus alone,
At holy time or solemn rite?
But every hour till life be flown,
Though weal or woe, in gloom or light—
Come to thy throne of grace, that we
In faith, hope, love, confirmed may be.

Lord, shall we come? come yet again?
Thy children, ask one blessing more
To come not now alone but then,
When life, and death, and time are o'er
Then, then, to come, O Lord, and be
Confirmed in Heaven, confirmed by thee.

Anon.

# THE WICKED DEFEATED, THE GOOD COMFORTED. PROVERBS XXVIII.

- 1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.
- 2 For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged,
- 3 A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.
- . 4 They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.
- 5 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD, understand all things.
- 6 Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.
- 7 Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.
- 8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.
- 9 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

  10 Whose causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil

way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.

11 The rich man is wise in his own conceit: but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.

13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

# GOD SOOTHES MAN'S SORROW.

Well do our hearts know the only true foundation for happiness. It can only be found in rendering due homage to the Mighty Being we worship, and by relying with confidence on redeeming love. Did we not understand this, each opening day would fill our bosoms with alarm, and we should lament that God had ordained us So dreary a situation, uncertainty so dismal, would render life dull and cheerless, while we could only look forward to death with horrible alarm. Darkness and mystery would throw their veil on every object, our own destiny not excepted. We should go through life without comprehending the purpose of existence, and die in brutal ignorance, not knowing why we were subjected to death. Our condition would be most pitiable. But thanks be, O God, to thee, for that revelation which has relieved our hearts from agonizing suspense, and taught us to know thy will, our own duty and ultimate condition.

In the world we have heretofore been oppressed by gloom and distressing doubts, but now we know how to erect our happiness on a foundation which is not to be shaken or destroyed. We feel that the Most High has written his commandments in our hearts; on him we can place the fullest reliance: and doing so while we enjoy the present without alloy of sorrow, we can look forward to the future without apprehension. We know in whom we trust, and are satisfied that through joys and sorrows, he will eventually conduct us to happiness and heaven.

With this assurance we can advance in peace. We cannot dread the fate reserved for us, when we know it rests with a God who is gracious, wise, and omnipotent. We know that happiness can only be found where the cruelty and discord which too often divide Christians, are put away, and where love and sympathy abound. To assist those who know comfort to enjoy happiness, and to render the unfortunate less unhappy, should be constantly our object. We must endeavour to remember how much we ourselves are indebted

to others, and be ever on the alert to do good in our turn.

If we perseveringly act on this impression, nothing can happen to our serious prejudice, since Christ by his death rendered our felicity hereafter certain. We cannot doubt of the love of our Almighty Creator, when we know that he suffered his Son to visit this world to effect our ransom.

The blessing of God is offered to us, if faithful to our high destiny, we are duly penetrated with a conviction of the love of Jesus, and calmly resign ourselves to the will of God.

May this day produce happy effects in us, and advance our immortal spirits towards perfection. Let us neglect no opportunity for strengthening our souls in sacred hope. In us may the goodness of our common Father, as heretofore, be exemplified, and may his every dispensation serve but to render us more steadfast in our love of the holy one.

Attend, O Lord, to this our morning supplication, and grant that, studious of thy ways, we may henceforth constantly walk in that path which thy Son has marked out for us to tread, with willing obedience. Deeming ourselves of the number of thy household, confident that we have an inheritance in heaven, no calamity shall make us forget thy wisdom and goodness, and cause us to relax in our efforts to gain thy smile. Devoted to thee, we desire to prove even in death how happy is he who has lived in the faith of Jesus, and assured of the grace of God.

#### INSTANCES OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

Give me leave to give you a taste of some of those providences that have been effectual, through the management of God, to bring salvation to the souls of his people.

The first shall be that of the woman of Samaria. It must happen that she must needs go out of the city to draw water (not before nor after, but) just when Jesus Christ her Saviour was come from far, and set to rest him, being weary, upon the well. What a blessed providence was this! Even a providence managed by the Almighty wisdom, and Almighty power to the conversion and salvation of this poor creature. For by this providence was this poor creature, and her Saviour brought together, that a blessed work might be fulfilled upon the Woman, according to the purpose before determined by the Father.

What providence was it, that there should be a tree in the way for Zaccheus to climb, thereby to give Jesus opportunity to call that chief of the publicans home to himself, even before he came down therefrom.

Was it not also wonderful, that the thief, which you read of in the gospel; should, by the providence of God, be cast into prison, to be condemned, even at that session that Christ himself was to die; nay, and that it should happen too, that they must be hanged together, that the thief might be in hearing and observing of Jesus in his last words, that he might be converted by him before his death?

What a strange providence was it, and as strangely managed by God, that Onesimus, when he was run away from his master, should be taken, and, as I think, cast into that very prison where Paul lay bound for the word of the gospel; that he might there be by him converted, and then sent home again to his master Philemon! "Behold all things work together for good, to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." Bunuan.

# EVENING. -FEBRUARY 9.

GOD THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTANT DEFENDER.

No change of times shall ever shock My firm affection, Lord to thee; For thou hast always been a rock, A fortress and defence to me.

Thou my deliv'rer art, my God; My trust is in thy mighty power; Thou art my shield from foes abroad. At home my safeguard and my tower.

To thee I'll still address my prayer, (To whom all praise we justly owe;) So shall I by thy watchful care Be guarded from my treacherous foe.

His subtle rage had near prevailed, When I distressed and friendless lay; But still, when other succours failed, God was my firm support and stay.

Watts.

GOD WILL PARDON REPENTANT TRANSGRESSORS. NEHEMIAH IX.

7 Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham :

8 And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perrizites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous:

9 And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and

heardest their cry by the Red Sea;

10 And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.

11 And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the

mighty waters.

12 Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go.

13 Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments:

14 And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand

of Moses thy servant:

15 And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.

16 But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments.

17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

#### DESPONDENCY REMOVED BY TRUE PENITENCE.

In those moments when the delights of prosperity have passed away, and hope is no more, when life becomes identified with suffering, even then should we despair? No; to thee, Oh God, will we appeal! Thou, thou alone canst help us. We are thy creatures, and thou hast created us for eternal felicity. By thee were our days numbered, our powers defined, even before we were called into existence. Let us then not despond: our God will not forsake us.

In the days of tribulation we have thus, ere now, appealed to the Universal Father, remembering that he himself has encouragingly said, "call upon me in thy necessities." We do so this evening, O Lord! Be thou our protector, our rock, our salvation! Thou canst uphold us as in the days that are past, and deliver us from sorrow.

The prophet Isaiah writes, "For peace I had great bitterness." Such has often been our lot; cares, doubts, and anguish, have oppressed us, and one difficulty surmounted has only brought a still greater one to our view. All around was sepulchral gloom, and we dared not communicate our distress, lest we should be mocked by our fellow-mortals. We have disguised an aching heart in affected cheerfulness and trembling, lest shame should overtake us, lest our enemies should prevail against us, while friends averted their eyes and coolly refused assistance. Then, deserted by all in this world, we felt that thou, Oh God! wouldest not abandon us, and by thy merciful dispensations, comfort again was restored. Affliction was banished from our bosoms, and peace, which we thought for ever lost, again became ours. They will never be forsaken who place their reliance on God.

"Behold for peace I had great bitterness," says the prophet, and in those days when we desponded, borne down to the earth by a sense of our unworthiness, how could we dare to hope that our numerous sins against thy majesty would be forgiven. How could we hope, having persevered so long in our evil courses, having abused thy goodness, that thou couldest all forgive? Cur

days were cheerless, our nights brought no refreshing sleep, and eternal perdition seemed before us. Graciously didst thou afford us time for repentance, and our souls heard the cheering voice of our good shepherd. Sincerely lamenting our past offences, true repentance came to us: we strove against the evil one, and we fervently prayed that we might no longer have to lament that "for peace we have great bitterness."

"Thou hast cast all my sins behind my back." Not yet, O God, is thy forbearance exhausted. Yet how culpable have we been-how often, after solemn vows of repentance, have we returned to our evil ways! We deserve not longer to be regarded as thy children, yet thou hast continued

thy loving kindness.

It was thine, Almighty Father; to send our Redeemer to this world, that he might lead the wanderers back as lost sheep to the eternal fold. He was sacrificed to ensure our salvation, and to us we feel were those blessed words of comfort addressed, "Come to me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, for my yoke is easy, and my burthen is light."

Through him our sins are pardoned: we bear his name; O may we deserve it! Oh may we duly appreciate the happiness which is ours from the gracious interference of Jesus Christ. We will no more doubt of finding pardon, so we have faith in him; for man did he shed his blood.

Then let us not doubt that it flowed for us, and while conscious of our own deficiencies, we will this evening, with humble but confident hope. bend before the throne of God, and entreat that our sins may be forgiven. Thou, O Lord, art bountiful to all thy creatures! Sustain and comfort us through the approaching night, that we may rise with fresh resolution to continue our pilgrimage. No peril shall have terrors for us if thou, O God! art our supporter.

Our sins are forgiven. How delicious the sensation which pervades our bosoms, while we recal that compassion which bids the offender. "Go and sin no more." Grant us, Oh God, when weakness and evil inclinations assail our firmness.

the aid of thy holy spirit to resist.

The Supreme Being is gracious to man. He will forgive, and he will enable us to carry the burden which he has suffered to be imposed upon us: may each of us be able in the end, joyfully to exclaim, "Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind my back."

THE CHRISTIAN MUST SUFFER, BUT WILL EVENTUALLY TRIUMPH.

"Almighty God shall confirm the hearts of his faithful, whom he has chosen before the creation of the world, that they may receive the eternal crown of glory. And let Antichrist rage as much as he will, yet he shall not prevail against Christ, which shall destroy him with the spirit of his mouth, as the apostle saith; and then shall the creature be delivered out of the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, as is expressed in the words following :-"We, also, within our fellows, do groan, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God—the redemption of our body."
"I am greatly comforted in those words of our Saviour:—

' Happy are you when men shall hate you, and shall separate you, and shall rebuke you, and shall cast out your name as execrable for the son of man. Rejoice and be glad, for, behold, great is your reward in heaven!'—Luke vi. O worthy! yea, most worthy consolation, which, not to understand, but to

practise, in time of tribulation, is a hard lesson!

"This rule St. James, with the other apostles, did well understand, who saith,- 'Count it exceeding joy, my brethren, when ye shall fall into divers temptations, knowing that the probation of your faith worketh patience; let patience have her perfect work; for certainly it is a great matter for a man to rejoice in trouble, and take it for joy to be in divers temptations.' A slight matter it is to speak it, and to expound it; but a great matter to fulfil it: for why, our most patient and most valiant champion himself, knowing that he should rise again the third day, overcoming his enemies by his death, and redeeming from damnation his elect, after his last supper, was troubled in spirit, and said,—' My soul is heavy unto death.' Of whom also the gospel saith, that he began to fear, to be sad and heavy, who, being then in an agony, was confirmed by an angel, and his sweat was like drops of blood, falling on the ground. And yet he, notwithstanding being so troubled, said to his disciples,—'Let not your hearts be troubled;' 'neither fear the cruelty of them that persecute you, for you shall have me with you always, that you may overcome the tyranny of your persecutors.' Whereupon those, his soldiers, looking upon the Prince and King of glory, sustained great conflicts. They passed through fire and water, and were saved, and received the crown of the Lord God, of the which St. James, in his canonical epistle, saith, Blessed is the man that suffereth temptation, for, when he shall be proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to those that love him.' Of this crown I trust steadfastly, the Lord will make me partaker also with you, which be the fervent sealers of the truth, and with all them which steadfastly and constantly do love the Lord Jesus Christ, which suffered for us, leaving to us an example that we should follow his steps. It behoved him to suffer, as he saith; and us, also, it behoves to suffer, that the members may suffer together with the head: 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.

> Prayer of John Huss, " Life and Times of the good Lord Cobham."

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 10.

THE LORD IS THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTANT FRIEND

Thee will I love, O Lord, my strength, My rock, my tower, my high defence; Thy mighty arm shall be my trust, For I have found salvation thence.

Death, and the terrors of the grave, Stood round me with their dismal shade; While floods of high temptation rose, And made my sinking soul afraid.

I saw the opening gates of hell, With endless pains and sorrows there, Which none but they that feel can tell, While I was hurried to despair.

In my distress I called my God, When I could scarce believe him mine; He bowed his ear to my complaint: Then did his grace appear divine.

Temptations fled at his rebuke, The blast of his Almighty breath; He sent salvation from on high, And drew me from the deeps of death,

Watto

GOD'S SERVANTS PROTECTED. ISAIAH, CHAP. LI.

1 Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,

and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and in-

creased him.

3 For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make

my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

5 My righteousness is near: my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and upon mine arm shall they trust.

5 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of

men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

11 Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing into Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12 I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thon shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the

son of man which shall be made as grass;

13 And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor as, if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?

# GOD'S GIFTS TO BE IMPARTED TO OTHERS.

Mighty Benefactor of mankind! thy kindness and thy love we can never sufficiently extol, when we contemplate the benefits which thou hast con-

ferred. We have but to look up to the heavens, or around us on the earth, to feel that thy goodness is infinite. There we behold wonders without end, and countless proofs of thy bounty to man. Our existence, and all that we possess, we owe to thee; all the advantages which lift us above other creatures, to wear thine own resemblance, is thy glorious gift. Our lives were a boon from our immortal Author; and awaking to another morning, we awake to a new manifestation of thy kindness. The love and gratitude we feel are the effects of thy grace, and were we not to acknowledge the immensity of thy goodness, we should deserve to enjoy the blessings we acknowledge no longer. Did we not attempt to use it to thy glory, we should not merit to retain this mortal frame, still less should we deserve to possess an immortal soul, if our thoughts were not reverentially turned to the source of our being. We feel astonished when we contemplate the enduring patience with which thou daily multipliest the manifestations of thy favour. They are continued notwithstanding our negligence and sinful doings. New favours we have constantly to acknowledge. Cold and ungrateful as we are, we still perceive our God has not forsaken us; and while our doings tend to future perdition, thou still graciously promisest us eternal happiness. We fly from thee, but thou comest to us, O Lord! How great, how vast, is thy forbearing indulgence!

Shall we longer neglect the riches of thy goodness? or shall we go on as ungratefully as heretofore? Oh no! Too long have we abused thy

bounty.

Let the present day awaken us to better feelings, and to resolutions more worthy of thy children, more appropriate to our condition! To thee. O gracious Father! this morning we desire to dedicate our powers, our leisure, our all. May it be ours, with affectionate obedience, to conform in everything to thy will; our bodies and souls shall praise thee, shall unceasingly proclaim thy mercy; and bearing that in mind, may our hearts be touched with pity for our suffering brethren, and let us not consider thy gifts to us are to be selfishly enjoyed, but grant that we may in all things deport ourselves as prudent and faithful stewards to an omnipotent Lord, who cannot be deceived. Our hands must not be closed when the wretched sue for pity. Be it our pride, our ambition, to imitate thy goodness, Oh all-merciful God! and to be ever ready to pity and assist the unfortunate, and to sustain and comfort all who may be under our care,—when we shall not fear to meet thy searching glance, when thou shalt demand an account of the way in which we have employed the means within our reach. Grateful friends will cheer us with their smiles, the good and the virtuous will applaud, our enemies must respect us, and a happy eternity be ours, when we quit this life.

#### THE CHRISTIAN COMFORTED AND ASSURED BY THE BIBLE.

When I came down to prayer on Lord's day morning, at eight o'clock, immediately after the short prayer with which you know we begin family worship, Mrs. Wilson (who has indeed showed a most prudent and tender care of the children, and managed her trust very well during your absence) came to me in tears, and told me that Mr. Knott wanted to speak with me: I immediately guessed his errand, especially when I saw he was so overwhelmed with grief that he could scarcely utter it. It was natural to ask if my child were dead? He told me she was yet alive, but that the doctor had hardly any hopes at all, for she was seized at two in the morning with a chilliness, which was attended with convulsions. No one, my dear, can judge so well as yourself what I must feel on such an occasion; yet I found, as I had just before done in my secret retirements, a most lively sense of the love and care of God, and a calm sweet resignation to his will, though the surprise of the news was almost as great as if my child had been seized in full health; for everybody before told me she was quite in a safe and comfortable way. I had now no refuge but prayer, in which the countenances of my pupils, when I told them the story, showed how much they were disposed to join with me. I had before me Mr. Clark's Book of the Promises; and though I had quite forgotten it, yet so it happened that I had left off, the Sabbath before, in the middle of a section, and at the beginning of the sixty-fifth page, so that the fresh words which came in course to be read were Matt. xxi. 22, "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive;" the next, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it it shall be done to you;" then followed, "Whatsoever ye shall ask my Father in my name, he will give it you; " "Ask and receive, that your joy may be full;" "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son;" "If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it;" and at last, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." These scrptiures falling thus undesignedly and unexpectedly in my way, at that moment, and thus directly following each other, in the order in which I have transcribed them, struck me and the whole family very sensibly; and I felt great encouragement earnestly to plead them in prayer, with a very firm persuasion that, one way or another, God would make this a very teaching circumstance to me and the family.

While I was thus employed, with an ardour of soul which, had it long continued, would have weakened and exhausted my spirits extremely, I was told that a gentleman wanted me: this grieved me exceedingly, till I found it was Mr. Hutton, now of the Moravian church, whose Christian exhortations and consolations were very reviving to me. He said, among other things, "God's will concerning you is, that you should be happy at all times, and in all circumstances; and particularly now, in this circumstance; happy in your child's life,

happy in its health, happy in its sickness, happy in its death, happy in its resurrection!" He promised to go and pray for it, and said he had known great effects attending such a method.

Dr. Doddridge.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 10.

GOD TO BE PRAISED FOR HIS GREATNESS AND HIS MERCY.

Give to our God immortal praise! Mercy and truth are all his ways: Wonders of grace to God belong, Repeat his mercies in your song.

Give to the Lord of Lords renown, The king of kings with glory crown; His mercies ever shall endure, When Lords and kings are known no more,

He built the earth, he spread the sky, And fixed the starry lights on high: Wonders of grace to God belong, Repeat his mercies in your song.

He fills the sun with morning-light, He bids the moon direct the night: His mercies ever shall endure, When suns and moons shall shine no more.

Watts.

# THE LORD GREAT IN HIS WORKS. PSALM CXLV.

3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

6 And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to

anger, and of great mercy.

9 The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over

all his works.

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord: and thy saints shall bless thee.

shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk

of thy power; 12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and

the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of

every living thing.

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all

his works.
18 The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to

all that call upon him in truth.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he will also hear their cry, and will save them.

#### NIGHT FRIENDLY TO MEDITATION.

O thou! blest Spirit! whether the supreme, Great antemundane Father! in whose breast Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt, And all its various revolutions rolled Present, though future; prior to themselves; Whose breath can blow it into nought again; Or from whose throne some delegated power, Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought From vain and vile, to solid and sublime! Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts Of inspiration, from a purer stream, And fuller of the god, than that which burst From famed Castalia: nor is yet allayed My sacred thirst; though long my soul has ranged Through pleasing paths of moral and divine, Br. these systemed in the long my store the suprementations.

By thee sustained, and lighted by the stars.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;

Nights are their days, their most illumined hours.

By day, the soul, o'erborne by life's career,

Stunned hy the din, and giddy with the glare,

Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng,

By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts

Imposed, precarious, broken ere mature.

By night, from objects free, from passion cool,

Thoughts uncontrolled, and unimpressed, the births

Of pure election, arbitrary range,

Not to the limits of one world confined;

But from ethereal travels light on earth,

As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond Of feathered fopperies, the sun adore: Darkness has more divinity for me; It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul To settle on herself, our point supreme! There lies our theatre! there sits our judge, Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene! 'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretched out 'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign, And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades Are man's asylum from the tainted throng. Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too; It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.

Young.

#### THE STARS PROCLAIM THE DEITY.

A magnificent and sublime spectacle is presented to us by the starry heavens, which at once indicate the majesty of our divine original, and of our own destiny. When we raise our eyes to the spangled firmament, can our souls be filled with any thing but wonder and sacred awe?

The further we attempt to penetrate into the mysteries of creation, the more we are lost. The nearest, the smallest star, is beyond our comprehension. Lord! what is man, that thou shouldest think of him, and the children of men, that they should be the objects of thy compassionate care? What are the noblest objects in this world, or man himself, compared with the works of the almighty hand which meet our eyes? And yet,

Omnipotent Creator! thy grace is shed over us, and our Saviour dispels the gloom in which we should otherwise languish, and dissipates the insignificance which had been ours. Are we, like the worlds which glisten on us from the sky, composed but of dust? Oh no! the greatness of spirits lifts us far above other bodies. Vast and splendid as those suns, and those worlds, may be. still the living soul, which can acknowledge the glory of its Eternal Author, is a nobler object. Like thee, O God! we are enabled to examine what is displayed before our eyes; but thou art the all of the boundless space in which suns and worlds revolve; we, but as a drop in the mighty ocean; yet this drop is identified with the dignity of an immortal spirit.

The thought is ennobling, that we, O God! are thy children! Thou hast given us being and intelligence to praise thee. But myriads exist, who know thee not. We can adore thy everlasting love, and such being our privilege, ought we to despond, if some of the conveniences of life are withheld from us? When the dark cloud of adversity hangs over us, threatening suffering and death, shall we yield to weak dismay? Misery and death we cannot fear, while with just confidence, we raise our eyes and our hearts to him, who has proclaimed himself The Lord our God.

The man who walks before thee in purity, treading in the footsteps of the Saviour of the world, could smile in security, though the whole globe should fall in ruins. He knows that in his Father's house there are many mansions. Our future abode thou hast provided, and with cheerful reverence we are prepared, under any circumstance, to bow to thy holy will.

Lord of all! we are overpowered with the contemplation of thy glory. In another state of being, we shall know thee better. This earth is to us but the threshold of existence. is coming, when the emancipated soul, bursting from the grasp of death, will rise, as on an eagle's wing, to the open gate of eternity. Then will it in the fulness of its joy, hail thee, Almighty Father! the source of all good. But what are we, that we should be permitted to entertain such daring hopes? It is only by thy grace that we can do so; that grace which assures us of thy benevolence, and that we are remembered amidst the millions of worlds which thou hast created, and that thou, as a parent, art pleased to see we, thy children, desire to offer thee the homage of our love. Grant, O God! that we may improve,

and live but to grow wiser! Let thy protecting arm be our guard this night. Thou hast conducted us in safety from the days of our infancy, and snatched us from peril; and when, ultimately, in the course of nature, death at length approaches, why should we shrink from its embrace, seeing that it can only bring us nearer to our heavenly Parent? From us the earth must pass away, but heaven will be open to receive us. Our Redeemer will place us among blessed spirits, and we shall join them in their never-ending song of "Glory to God!"

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 11.

GRACE TO GUIDE MAN THROUGH THE WORLD IMPLORED.

I'm in a world of hopes and fears, A wilderness of toils and tears, Where foes alarm, and dangers threat, And pleasures kill, and glories cheat.

Shed down, O Lord! a heavenly ray To guide them in the doubtful way; And o'er me hold thy shield of pow'r To guard me in the dang'rous hour.

Teach me the flatt'ring path to shun, In which the thoughtless many run; Who for a shade the substance miss, And grasp their ruin in their bliss.

Each sacred principle impart; The faith that sanctifies the heart; Hope, that to heaven's high vault aspires; And love, that warms with holy fires.

Rappon's Collection.

GOD NOT ENTREATED IN VAIN BY HIS PEOPLE.

EZRA VIII.

18 And by the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen;

19 And Ashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty;

20 Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance

22 For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.

23 So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he

was entreated of us.

24 ¶ Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them.

25 And weighed upon them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellers, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered:

26 I even weighed unto their hand, six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, and of

gold an hundred talents;

27 Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold.

28 And I said unto them, ye are holy unto the Lord; the vessels are holy also; and the silver and the gold are a free will offering unto the Lord God of your fathers.

29 Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the

30 So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jerusa-

lem unto the house of our God.

31 ¶ Then we departed from the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

# IMPORTANCE OF GUARDING AGAINST THE SNARES OF THE WORLD.

Besieged by many temptations, exposed to those dangers inseparable from the allurements of sin, our hearts rest in supine indifference, nor tremble for that which may prove fatal to our peace. To us this has been, in countless instances, the source of great sorrow; let us, for the future, pray that we may have more strength to resist the tempter, that the willing spirit may not be subdued by the weakness of the flesh. Resolutions to this effect we have often adopted, but forgot to adhere to them. When we have consecrated our hearts to God while gazing on the rising sun, we have returned to our sinful ways before the close of the evening. Our good inclinations have proved too fragile to survive contact with the world, and have wholly vanished when we emerged from solitude. So perhaps it will be to-day; in another hour the devout feelings we at present cherish, may be ours no more, and we rush headlong into the sinful cares and degrading vanities of life, forgetful of the God to whom we now appeal.

Such alas! is the human heart, and therefore it is most important that we should always be on the watch to combat our evil passions, and always anxious, by prayer and humiliation, to strengthen the virtuous impulses we, from time to time, experience. We must watch most carefully, lest our hearts be corrupted, and our ardour abated. Weak and erring creatures as we are, how shall we be able to preserve ourselves faithful to duty.

We are like the mariner who, on the tempesttorn sea, feels his bark must be lost, if immediate aid is not supplied. In our case, who can come to our assistance? who can save us from those storms of iniquity which threaten to swallow our souls? who can interpose and conduct us into a blessed haven, where we may repose with safety? It is thou, O gracious Lord, who can alone extend to us this mercy. Defend us, save thy creatures from the sinful passions which tempt them from the path to heaven. From that pride and wickedness which we have often known. which have repeatedly been the subject of late but bitter regret, preserve us for the time to come. and let our souls learn to seek thee with true devotion, no longer withheld by the hateful pleasures, and mean affairs of a world like this. Will snares be laid for us to-day? be it thine, O Lord, to enable us to detect and avoid falling into them. Incline our hearts to take that course which must guide us to happiness in the world to come: and give us wisdom and reflection, constantly to examine our hearts, so that we may be evermore prepared to guit this life, and, when called from it, rejoice that we are passing to that safe and blissful home where no foe can assail, and no temptation undermine our innocence, and with it, our happiness.

BEG TO BE STRENGTHENED AGAINST THE WEAKNESS OF THE FLESH.

It cannot be too often repeated, that the true believer is not under the law, as a covenant of works—bound to keep the precept for life, or liable to the penalty of death. He is not under the law in this respect, but under grace. He is one with Christ, who kept the precept, and suffered the penalty for him, as his surety, and in his stead. He has put in his plea, and taken the benefit of Christ's suretyship: his plea has been admitted; and therefore he is in a state of perfect acceptance. He stands in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free: grace reigns in him, and over him, and renders his obedience perfect freedom. He obeys, but it is all in faith: he works, but it is from a sense of the Father's love to him in his Son. Gratitude, taught by the Holy Spirit, influences his heart and life: his heart has the love of God written upon it, and his life manifests it: he serves God with a thankful mind, and without fear, and cheerfully does all the good he can to man for God's sake.

The believer will never get on in the way of duty, unless he learn to obey upon these gospel principles. He will stand in need of their assistance at every step, for he will meet with constant opposition to them: the flesh will not come under grace: the carnal mind is always legal: the old man of sin knows nothing but working for life, and will not submit to any other way; our sinful nature is altogether for the coverant of works: Jews, Turks, Heathens, and nominal Christians, are all upon one plan: they expect God will be merciful to them for their doings: and the children of God are exercised with this self-righteous spirit more or less all their days. Is

it not, O my soul, thy grief and burden? Art thou not daily plagued with it in thy duties? And though thy principles be very evangelical, yet they too often fail thee in practice. Oh, beg of God then, earnestly and often, that thou mayest be cast into the mould of the gospel, quite evangelized in thy mind, and mayest perform all duties upon such motives as he himself requires and approves.

Romaine.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 11.

HOPE FOR THE PENITENT.

The heart in penitent distress Laments its own unworthiness, Despairing heaven to win: In hopeless misery will live, Persuaded God cannot forgive, One so immersed in sin.

Groveller, lift up from earth thine eye, Behold the rainbow in the sky, Let that thy mind inform: It is the great Jehovah's plan, That his too erring favourite, man, Shall still survive the storm.

That power which could recal to breath, Lazarus, who slept the sleep of death, Confesses no decrease:
And so we strive to sin no more,—
Abounding mercy can restore
The broken heart to peace.

E.

# FORGIVENESS FOR REPENTANT WANDERERS. NEHEMIAH I.

5 I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee; both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations;

9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them, though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I be seech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy.

# LAMENT FOR LOST TIME.

When our Saviour was on earth, and even while an infant he rested in his cradle, he was

surrounded by hostility, by danger, and by death. To the deserts of Egypt, Mary and Joseph found it necessary to fly to escape the murderous Herod: nor dared they to return till that tyrant died at Jericho, and was succeeded by his son Archelaus.

The great sensation which had been made by the advent of Jesus, was then no longer remembered. Though the Jews were constantly in expectation of the Messiah, they could not suppose that he was already among them, sporting in childish innocence in the gardens of Nazareth. What had been related of him, was by many disbelieved, and the angels' song which was heard at the hour of his birth, no longer sounded in their ears.

Before he commenced the great work of redemption, his life was most extraordinary. It was marked by piety from day to day: the time granted him in this world by his Eternal Father, was wisely employed, so that to no moment of the past could he look back with penitence or shame.

Would that we could act such a part! How much nearer might we have approached to him than we have done, had we not weakly and sinfully given ourselves up to other courses, instead of seeking at all times to improve ourselves in holiness, philanthropy, and truth. We call ourselves the followers of Jesus. We ought then to tread in his steps. Oh, ye lost days, ye banished hours of our life which have fled for ever, accuse us not before our God!

We indeed may have acted with integrity, may have laboured to provide for our families, may have been industrious to improve our condition, and so far fulfilled our duty: but this was a duty which we were not moved to discharge by the love of God, but simply to raise ourselves in the estimation of our worldly friends. The heathen does as much, he will sometimes act a better part. And have we not sometimes been wanting in correctness and truth? have not envy and malice too often influenced us? have we always appropriated what we could conveniently spare, to comfort our fellow-creatures, and to abate the misery which we knew to exist? When we put these questions to ourselves, we may with too much reason exclaim. Lost days, lost hours, lost opportunities, accuse us not before our God!

Not such was the course pursued by our divine Redeemer, he laboured for others and not for himself: his was a life of self-denial: by divine courage and holy perseverance he overcame all the privations and suffering that were heaped upon him: and this he did for our salvation.

Our hearts have received the warnings of God, when fear, and care, and anxiety, have occupied our minds. That pain has for the most part been brought upon ourselves; a mild punishment for serious transgressions, or rather mercifully administered to bring our wandering thoughts back to God, and lift our eyes above the world. Such was the effect of it, but the pain relieved, our better resolutions were remembered no more, and we remained sinners as before. We have placed confidence in ourselves rather than in the love of God, and thus a long period, which might have been devoted to prepare our souls for eternity, has been wasted. Feeling that we are not what we might be, how shall we encounter the dread judge of all? Ye lost days, ye vanished years, accuse us not before God!

We are, however, not yet wholly lost: we can still reverence the Eternal, and feel penitence for our misdeeds. Why then not act a wiser part, and use the existence which God has granted us, to become better than we have been?

As Christ employed nearly the whole of his mortal life in the performance of the duty imposed upon him, so should our souls labour for a higher object than any we ordinarily pursue, always remembering that this state of being is but the commencement of an immortal career.

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold of eternal life, whereunto thou art also called." Such was the appeal of the disciple of Jesus to Timothy, be it also that of eternal compassion to us. Let it stir us up to struggle against the weaknesses of our nature, and the impure thoughts of our hearts. Let it be ours to fight the good fight as Jesus did, to overcome whatever there is of human depravity in us, in order that our whole attention may be fixed on things divine.

Fight the good fight of faith. Ay, the fight of faith. Till now we have only been just in the worldly sense of the word, and not in the true spirit of the Lord. Hence we have been less happy than we might have been. Not even wisdom can bestow upon us the blessings which a heaven-aspiring mind can give. We must act in conformity with the wisdom of God, guided by faith in his son, before we can know happiness.

Oh gracious Lord! how undeserving are we, yet still thy grace is not withdrawn from us. Accept the homage of our gratitude: and Oh, as thou hast supported us till now, continue to sustain; have pity on us, and grant that we may reach a state of blessedness. We will not turn

aside from endeavouring to comprehend thy holy word, that we may thereby become sanctified and estranged to evil. In the path of our Saviour we desire to tread, and may his atoning blood wash away all our sins.

Into thy hands, O Lord, we commend our spirits. Relying on thee, our apprehensions for

the future are at an end.

Thou art our God, our Father! From this time forward we resolve to lead a better and purer life; we will fight the good fight, and aspire to that eternity which celestial bounty presents before us. Open to us the gates of eternity, O Lord, our gracious Saviour, and let us enter into the community of the blest who repose in thy eternal kingdom.

PRAYER ASCENDS TO HEAVEN.

Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the Holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek, up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hasty, and is full of mercy: prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest : prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts; it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier-garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if he had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministers here below. So is the prayer of a good man: when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument; and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud; and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose that prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

Jeremy Taylor.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 12.

MERCY IMPLORED.

O thou whose mercy knows no bound
(Else hadst thou ne'er redeemed thy foe;)
Whose love's a fathomless profound,
Which known, we wish still more to know;
That mercy, Lord, that love reveal,
And let thy Spirit stamp thy seal.

From wavering doubts, from chilling fear, Save us, thou God of truth and light!
Thy word is sure; Oh bring it near,
Nor let us mourn in endless night!
Let the day dawn, the day-star rise,
And pour all heaven upon our eyes.

Behold, like wax before the fire,
Our melting hearts dissolve with grief:
To thee, O Lord, is our desire;
From thee alone we hope relief.
Thy mercy and thy love reveal;
And let thy Spirit stamp the seal.

THE PRIDE OF MAN SHALL BE HUMBLED. ISAIAH, II.

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lono's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the

word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light

of the Lord.

6 ¶ Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and *are* soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers.

7 Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses,

neither is there any end of their chariots.

8 Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.

9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man

humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.

10 ¶ Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for

fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone

hall be exalted in that day.

12 For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted

up; and he shall be brought low:

13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and

lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, 14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills

that are lifted up,

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, 16 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. 17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

# MAN'S THOUGHTS SHOULD DWELL ON ETERNITY.

During the whole course of our lives, we have, perhaps, never had our thoughts so wholly fixed on eternity as to have constantly dwelt on its vast importance through the whole day;—never given up our hearts unceasingly to the momentous question, for what purpose were we created, and endowed with the faculties we possess? Now, at the opening of a new day, let this reflection be duly entertained, and it will prove one full of blessing, properly employed in preparing for heaven.

And what can be more gratifying than the thought that we are among the miracles worked by the hand of the Almighty? Our admirably fashioned bodies, with all their appropriate members, and all their mental energies, have been bestowed by God. The wonderful circulation of the blood through all parts of our form, which sustains existence till the Omnipotent ordains that our hearts shall cease to beat, our blood become stagnant, and our lungs respire no longer. These all come from the incomparable skill of our great Creator; but what is that which enables us to entertain such thoughts, look up to that Creator, and admire his greatness, in all his works? It is not this perishable frame that is capable of thought and admiration; that is but the temporary abode of the soul. The soul it is, which knows good from evil, gives us the power of volition, and wakes us to a sense of the majesty of truth and virtue.

Have we made a fitting use of our minds, and are we now even fixed to adhere to the good, and resolutely avoid the path of evil? We feel abashed at the interrogatory, and can do no other than confess that our disposition is less pious than it might be, our zeal languid, while sceptical doubts find access to the heart, which, so assailed, fails to render just homage to the Deity. Too often do we lose the recollection of him, as well as the account which we must one day render of ourselves. Too readily do we yield to the influence of passion, and lose ourselves in the vanities of life. We too highly value the riches of the world, and lose that valuable time which ought to be wisely economized.

Awakening from the intoxicating delusions to which we have surrendered ourselves, and enter-

ing upon the work of self-examination, we are ever ready to excuse the sins we have committed, and care too little for that grace which has been extended to us. Most injurious is this frame of mind, which prevents our sanctifying our lives. Yet where shall we find peace, but in the blissful persuasion that we are of the number of Christ's children? That alone can give us the animation requisite to struggle with our evil inclinations, and tranquillize our souls. The privilege conceded to us, by our Saviour, fills us with hope. and assures us of never-ending happiness. By our Redeemer we are placed in the way of gaining eternal life, while here we are the favourites of our Almighty Parent. Be it our ceaseless aim to render ourselves worthy of such vast advantages, by increased ardour in the cause of our Lord, and by seeking the happiness of our fellow mortals, to secure eternal salvation. We can only hope to gain this, through unwearied efforts in the cause of virtue, and devout resignation to the will of the Most High. May we henceforth be properly sensible of this; then shall we be remembered by our posterity with blessings, we shall be honoured by our contemporaries as friends and benefactors, and death will be divested of its terrors. We shall then, when our present lives have closed, be eternally happy; while the weak deluded beings who, enjoying worldly splendour, deem themselves mighty, are miserably humbled, and doomed to enter on a scene of never-ending woe; and we shall, before the world, rejoice as the heirs of glory, and find our home in heaven.

#### THE DOOM OF MORTALITY.

It is a mighty change that is made by the death of every person, and it is visible to us who are alive. Reckon but from the sprightfulness of youth, and the fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood; from the vigorousness and strong flexure of the joints of five-and-twenty, to the hollowness and deadly paleness, to the loathsomeness and horror of a three days' burial, and we shall then perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and, at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk; and at night, having lost some of its leaves, and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces. The same is the portion of every man and every woman; the heritage of worms and serpents, rottenness and cold dishonour, and our beauty so changed, that our acquaintance quickly know us not; and that change mingled with so much horror, or else meets so with our fears and weak discoursings, that they who, six hours ago, tended upon us either with charitable or ambitious services, cannot, without some regret, stay in the room alone, where the body lies stripped of its life and honour. I have read of a fair young German gentleman, who, living, often refused to be pictured, but put off the importunity of his friends' desire by giving way, that after a few days' burial, they might send a painter to his vault, and, if they saw cause for it, draw the image of his death unto the life. They did so, and found his face half eaten, and his midriff and back-bone full of serpents; and so he stands pictured among his armed ancestors. So does the fairest beauty change; and it will be as bad with you and me; and then what servants shall we have to wait upon us in the grave? what friends to visit us? what officious people to cleanse away the moist and unwholesome cloud reflected upon our faces from the sides of the weeping vaults, which are the longest weepers for our funeral.

A man may read a sermon, the best and most passionate that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. In the same Escurial where the Spanish princes live in greatness and power, and decree war or peace, they have wisely placed a cemetery, where their ashes and their glory shall sleep till time shall be no more; and where our kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandsire's head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like gods to die like men. There is enough to cool the flames of lust, to abate the heights of pride, to appease the itch of covetous desires, to sully and dash out the dissembling colours of a lustful, artificial, and imaginary beauty. There the warlike and peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world that, when we die, our ashes shall be equal to kings', and our accounts easier, and our pains for our crowns Jeremy Taylor. shall be less.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 12.

FAITH TRIUMPHANT IN DEATH.

Death! 'tis a melancholy day
To those that have no God,
When the poor soul is forced away
To seek her last abode.

In vain to heaven she lifts her eyes,
But guilt, a heavy chain,
Still drags her downward from the skies
To darkness, fire and pain.

Awake and mourn ye heirs of hell, Let stubborn sinners fear, You must be driv'n from earth, and dwell A long forever there.

See how the pit gapes wide for you;
And flashes in your face,
And thou, my soul, look downwards too,
And sing recovering grace.

He is a God of sovereign love
That promised heaven to me;
And taught my thoughts to soar above,
Where happy spirits be.

Prepare me, Lord, for thy right hand,
Then come the joyful day,
Come death, and some celestial band
To bear my soul away.

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH. GALATIANS V.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lo-d, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubieth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

# FAITH ESSENTIAL TO WORLDLY COMFORT AND ETERNAL HAPPINESS.

How vast are the blessings of faith—how indispensable is it to our well being! That wanting, no talents, no virtues are sufficient to secure our happiness. Have our hearts responded to these enquiries? Let those who boast superior education and enlarged understandings, tell if they have duly reflected on the importance of religion; on the source of peace while we live, and of blessed consolation when we die.

Weak, trembling mortal, hast thou no appreciation of the dignity of the faith revealed by Jesus Christ? Is the necessity of that faith which reconciles all worldly contradictions not comprehended?

Faith only is to be valued, which satisfies us of our high destiny from the assurance that a redeemer beyond the grave will render virtue of far higher importance than all worldly wisdom; it will cleanse our hearts from sin under all circumstances, and impart magnanimity and integrity when in the trials of life we encounter reproach and persecution from our fellow-creatures for attempting to do good.

Faith wanted, our lives cannot be pleasing in the sight of God. That we are taught by the Bible, "for he that cometh to God must believe that God lives, and that he is a rewarder of them that

Watts.

diligently seek him." In the absence of faith, true virtue cannot exist, for virtue ought to surpass the mere wisdom of the world.

Integrity or morality are but recommendations to the esteem of men, and serve but to beautify and gladden our earthly career. Our Lord demands virtues superior to everything terrestrial: they must be equal to the greatest sacrifices, and must exist in their greatest perfection, unsustained by the applause of man. Real greatness of soul cannot be ours without faith. Having no faith in eternity, virtue and its duties would be but folly. Where there is no faith, we meet but with hypocrites, who wear the semblance of virtue, but are the votaries of sin. The man who stands not in awe of the all-seeing eye of God, can have little respect for the observation of short-sighted mortals.

There is no satisfying comfort here for man without faith. All the virtues which sustain us in adversity, fail us at last. Upright conduct is not valued, and we are hurried forward to the verge of despair. Faith in a good providence which governs the universe and all human destinies; faith in everlasting bounty which suffers us not to sink in hopeless woe; faith in a power and a will to requite us in another world for all that may afflict us in this, can alone cheer the drooping heart oppressed by the calamities of life.

Unhappy sinner who wanteth faith, go, visit the coffin of thy father, of thy mother, of thy wife, or of thy child, and there ask what can abate thy unavailing grief? Then shalt thou feel that it is not integrity in the worldly sense of the word that can cheer thee. That cannot recal the beloved ones who slumber in death, and the dying smile, the last fond pressure of the cold hand, was for thee an eternal separation. On thee no ray of heavenly light can beam to illumine the darkness of thy life. If no God of justice beholds thy tears to recompense thy bitter sorrows in another world, what consolation canst thou know? Even love itself would seem valueless if it could endure only through this brief troubled dream of life.

For thyself, when thy powers shall fail, and a new generation point to thee, sinking in the vale of years with thoughtless ridicule; when all the infirmities of accumulated years press on thy declining gaze, and point but to the grave; what will soothe thee, or what console thee when death at length seizes his victim, and thou seest thy weary existence passing away as a shadow? Oh mortal, who hast no faith, know it is when

the open sepulchre expects thee, that the desire of a happier state of being will swell thy bosom, and a sigh for eternal life will burst from thy fainting heart. The consciousness of a better, of an eternal life, which faith supplies, can alone support thee in thy latest hour.

Let then thy faith, Oh Saviour, encourage and purify us. Salvation can only be found in thy revelations; we have no substantial hope but in the sacrifice which thy mercy made for our redemption. A sincere feeling of our own unworthiness, and a confident reliance on Christ and the grace of God, as seen in him—that only can render life comfortable, and death happy.

In this faith our souls will continue. It will afford us the sweetest consolation even when we are most oppressed by the consciousness of our imperfections. It will prompt devotion, and improve our morals; it will save us from the tempter.

Creator of Man! father of the human race, our best efforts in vain aspire to be perfect as thou art perfect, unaided by thy grace. We are sinful mortals, and overwhelming despondency must come upon us if faith be wanting. In mercy, O God, let thy grace be extended to us; and when our earthly existence shall reach its termination, grant that we may know the unspeakable felicity of hearing from thy august voice, the soul-cheering declaration, "By thy faith art thou saved."

#### HE WHO HAS FAITH IS SAFE.

One Lord, one faith, one salvation: and whoever believes this aright is in a safe state, in which there is no change with respect to God; no variableness, or shadow of turning. Whatever his own apprehensions may be, the word of the Lord endureth for ever. He may be tempted in a legal hour to cast away his confidence, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand. He may change; but I, saith God, change not: for the gracious gifts and calling of God are without repentance -they are such, that it cannot repent him of bestowing them. or of continuing them, when once bestowed. As the believer has no new truth to learn, only to improve the principles of the doctrine of Christ, so he has no new title to expect. Under the free grant and gift of God, salvation comes to him of grace, in the most sovereign way that can be conceived; and his warrant to receive it is the divine command; and when he has been enabled to receive it by the obedience of faith, the divine promise assures him that he shall not perish for his sins, but that he shall have everlasting life. Believing the promise is the best title that possibly can be to this salvation; for we are saved freely by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, neither salvation nor faith; both are the gifts of God: and under this title all the blessings which accompany salvation are included, all the things which are freely given to us of God-a sufficiency of present grace, and the full possession of eternal glory. This is the good old foundation, upon which the heirs of promise have always built their faith and hope. They knew that all the fulness was in Christ for their use and enjoyment: and they were persuaded that they should honour him most, by believing this with the strongest sincerity. They could not trust too soon, nor too much, to his faithfulness: and therefore they come boldly to the throne of grace, that they may receive out of his fulness at all times, for all things, for body and soul, for earth and heaven, what they wanted, and what he had promised. The more they live thus by faith, they will experience more occasion to rejoice in

Romaine.

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 13.

HOPE IN GOD'S TRUST.

With earnest longings of the mind, My God to thee I look; So pants the hunted hart, to find And taste the cooling brook.

When shall I see thy courts of grace, And meet my God again? So long an absence from thy face My heart endures with pain.

Temptations vex my weary soul, And tears are my repast; The foe insults without controul, And where's your God at last?

'Tis with a mournful pleasure now,
I think on ancient days:
Then in thine house did numbers go
And all our work was praise.

But why, my soul, sunk down so far Beneath this heavy load? Why do my thoughts indulge despair, And sin against my God?

Hope in the Lord, whose mighty hand Can all thy woes remove, For I shall yet before him stand, And sing restoring love.

Watts.

#### GRATEFULNESS AND PRAYER NECESSARY. I. THESS. V.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you:

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among all yourselves, and to all men.

16 Rejoice evermore, 17 Pray without ceasing.

#### DANGER OF PROCRASTINATION.

If we are proceeding towards heaven, there to be punished or rewarded for our doings in this life, how weak, how wicked is the folly which has postponed those studies most important to our earthly comfort, the improvement of our minds. and our everlasting salvation. Shall we, like many of our unthinking fellow-mortals, advance with indifference towards the inevitable hour, in which we must appear at the bar of God? Should we madly delay, and be snatched away in the midst of thoughtless indulgence, we may have no moment in which we can duly repent our negligence, much less atone for it. That this has not already taken place, we owe to the abounding goodness of God. The danger is now obvious: we see it; the delay of a single day, of an hour, to mend our hearts and seek treasures in heaven, may lead to despair. Let then our resolution be steadfast, never again to give way to evil inclinations; let us no more neglect the opportunities granted to us for rendering ourselves acceptable in the sight of our Creator. Frail as we are, it is not for us to expect that a long course of years will intervene between us and the grave. How then can we answer for it to God, or even to ourselves; if we neglect one hour of that time which may be granted for preparation and repentance? Often already warned by the Almighty of our danger, we have heard, but not attended to his voice; our hearts have become hardened, and our consciences have slept. We must not again act with such foolish rashness—we must not trifle thus with immortal concerns. He who gave us being, may send the angel of death to us without granting us any previous intimation that such is his purpose. Death may come when least expected, and the warning voice which we have hitherto neglected, be heard no more. Have we

reason to hope that again our hearts will be roused to the necessity of reform after having so repeatedly refused to listen to what reason and con-

science would whisper.

In this opening morning, let us earnestly listen to the voice of God. Before this day shall reach its close, it may be that we shall hear the dread sentence, "Mortals, thou must die." We will imagine ourselves in the condition of men at the point of dissolution, and do now in the season of health, what we should be moved to do on the bed of death. In humble reverence we will bend before our Creator, and cultivate that piety, that lively faith in his goodness, which may best soothe us in our last hour. Into thy hands we commit our spirits, O God! We determine to strive with the weakness of our nature, to put away every vicious thought or action, the recollection of which might heighten the bitterness of our final hour.

O God, who hast bestowed the wisdom to resolve, grant the inclination and ability to perform. Teach us so to value our time that we may use it to thy glory and our own advantage: and dwelling constantly upon the reflection that our lives are necessarily but transitory, enlighten our understandings, that we may use wisely that space of time, which thy bounty has graciously conceded

to us.

## 4 THE HEART DEAD.

Let us also consider of, and deeply meditate upon the transcendant love of the Son of God himself; who, though he were the delight of his father, and lay in the bosom of his father, even then his delights were with the sons of men, then was his heart full of love to poor sinners; and his love brought him down from heaven to earth, to assume human nature, to take upon him all the sins of his people, to bear them on his soul and body in the garden, there sweating great drops of blood, and on the cross there pouring out his heart blood, made a curse, endured the full measure of the wrath of God due for sin, and became the ransom of souls, loved us, and gave himself for us: "Loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood."

But while I am writing these things, I cannot but conceive an indignation against myself, and heartily wish, I were filled with shame, sorrow, and grief of spirit, that having read and heard so often of the surpassing love of God the Father, in giving his Son; and so often of the unspeakable love of Jesus. and to be no more affected with it, no more sensible of it, to have my affections no more stirred and moved, no more quickened and warmed. Alas, my dead heart, my adamantine heart! Lord, sprinkle it with the blood, Lord, shed abroad that love of thine upon my heart abundantly by the Holy Ghost: Lord Jesus, manifest thy love to me, that I may love thee. I am ashamed and pained for want of love to God, to Jesus; O that I could believe thy love to my soul, then I should not choose but love thee. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. The consideration of this love of God, and of Christ, is a means to work faith, try it, I pray you, you will find it so.

Bunyan.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 13.

#### GRATITUDE FOR HEAVENLY FAVOURS.

O render thanks to God above. The fountain of eternal love! Whose mercy firm through ages past Has stood, and shall for ever last.

Who can his mighty deeds express, Not only vast but numberless What mortal eloquence can raise His tribute of immortal praise?

Happy are they, and only they, Who from thy judgments never stray, Who know what's right; not only so, But always practise what they know.

Extend to me that favour, Lord, Thou to thy chosen dost afford; When thou return'st to set them free. Let thy salvation visit me.

Watte

# GOD LISTENS TO HIS WORSHIPPERS. PSALM LXVI.

1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto

thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. 6 He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the

flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. 8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his

praise to be heard:

9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. 16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare

what he hath done for my soul. 17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled

with my tongue.

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me:

19 But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

# BE PURE IN HEART.

Awake, thou Christian, raise thy eyes to heaven, collect thy strength and courage, let hope revive in thy bosom, and be happy! Dismiss vain alarm, and take thy place among the blessed. "Blessed are they who are pure in heart, for they shall see God!"

Yes, it will be ours to see God, not merely with the eyes of this body, but with our whole souls. Cleansed and purified as we shall be, we shall see, and feel, and know Him in the spirit. If pure in heart, consciousness of that purity. even while here, will lift us above the ordinary cares of mortal existence, and teach our souls to exult in a heaven all their own. If pure in heart, with all we hear, or learn, or think of God and eternity, a thrill of divine rapture will pass through us like a ray of glory from a brighter world. Though kings should lay their crowns at our feet, and those who are rich and mighty present their full coffers before us, for all their glittering treasures, the truly wise would not exchange that inward peace, which by our own persevering efforts we may obtain for ourselves.

Thou wilt see God, O Christian! Thou, ransomed and favoured by thy Redeemer, wilt see Him with the eyes of thy soul which have been opened to the day, by the glory of our Lord.

Reformed and exalted by piety, released by the influence of religion from the grovelling desires of the flesh, the soul of man gains enlarged powers.

Thou wilt see God, by treading in the footsteps of his son. When millions of stars glisten in the glorious firmament, cheering the winter's night; when spring presents its radiant offering of variegated flowers; or when, in the tempest of summer, the forked lightning displays itself in the vast concave of heaven; or when the equinoctial gales of autumn tear up the oak which has flourished for a century; in the glistening of the stars, the soft beauty of the flowers, the vivid lightnings in the sky, and the roaring of the storm, thou wilt recognise God in the immensity of his creation; thus it is he makes himself known, thus he speaks to thy heart.

Christian, thou wilt see God, being associated with him through the merits of thy Redeemer. Thou shalt be in ceaseless communication with Him. He will be present to thy mind when, with devout energy, thou bendest in prayer before Him, as he was seen by Christ while he sorrowed in the garden of Gethsemane; or when suffering on the cross he prayed for a sinful world; and when, victorious over death, he again appeared to his wondering disciples.

Thou wilt see Him, sincere and pious Christian, even when the damp of death is on thy brow, and thou canst no longer look at the charms of the world. Then to thee he will be seen, when the portals of heaven are thrown open before thee,

and the dreary scene in which thou hast toiled fades from thy view like a vision of the night.

We, O God, shall see thee in thy glory, in thy might, in thy majesty, and in thy love. When bursting from these bonds which chain us to the world, we rise to contemplate terrestrial things, and return to our home, feeling, O gracious God, that from thee we sprung.

It was thine to awaken the animating spark which we call spirit: it was thine to call it from the bosom of eternity—to the bosom of eternity it will return.

We shall see thee, O God! How rich, how exalting the hope! We look forward to perfection as the goal which we are to reach. The mysteries of the universe are no longer veiled from our sight, and we experience indescribable rapture. Rendered perfect and glorious ourselves by thy grace, we shall see thee, O Father! in the spirit. We shall be a part of that infinity which thou hast ordained, and share in perfection, of which, but for thy revelation, we could have no idea. Creator of the universe, how shall we worthly adore thee, when surrounded by the splendour of immortal spirits, who make myriads of worlds and all heaven resound, with hymns to thy glory!

But let not our souls too presumptuously aspire. With all humility, let us offer our homage to the great arbiter of all. Hereafter our souls may approach his throne with those for whom, as well as for us, the blood of the holy one was shed.

Hitherto we have been but too prone to sin. Knowing that, how dare we claim a place in heaven. It is only the pure of heart that can see God. Grant, then, that we may become pure in heart; fill us with thy holy spirit that we may persevere in seeking real improvement. If we conquer our weakness it will be a blessed triumph. Then may we exultingly say to those who are near to our death-bed, "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

#### SELF-EXAMINATION GOOD FOR THE SOUL.

"I will commune with my own heart," expatiate, meditate. The psalmist David recommends this in Ps. iv. 4. This is too generally neglected by irreligious people. They cannot bear reflection, they endeavour to shun serious self-examination. Nay, religious people are too deficient in this duty. When occupied with worldly concerns, they frequently neglect due attention to the state of their souls. Some kinds of affliction afford a favourable opportunity, by confining us from more active employments. Others, though perplexing, and such as may lessen our leisure time, evidently call for it; and if the



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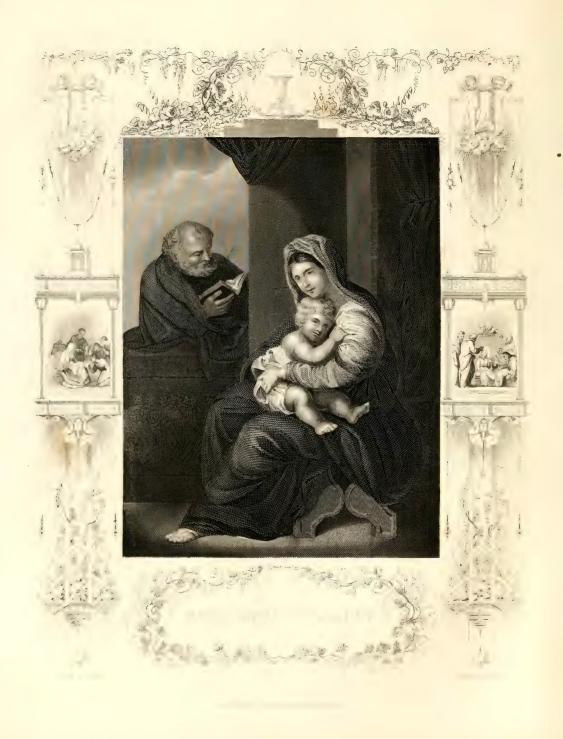
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"Act but the infant's gentle part,
Give up to love thy willing heart;
No fondest parent's tender breast
Veryen life thy God's to make thee bleadd.

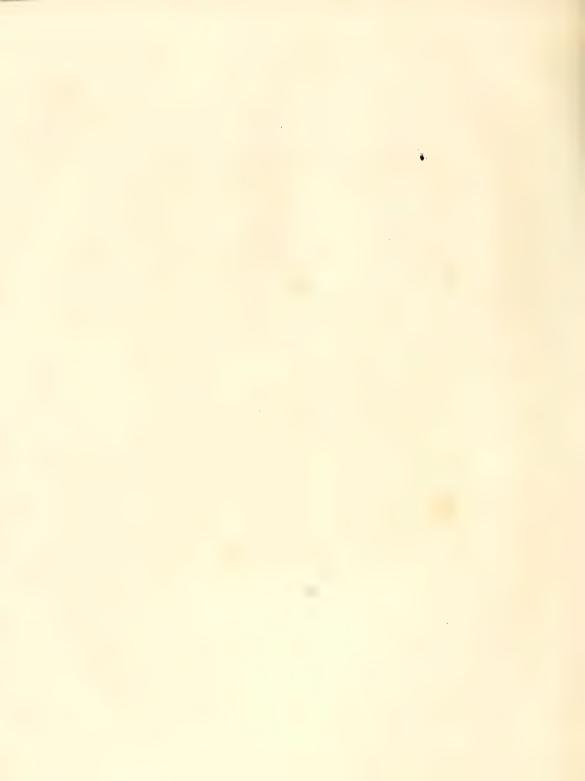












mind be duly impressed, some season may be found for it. In the day of adversity consider. Let then the afflicted learn of Asaph to commune with their own hearts. Examine into the state of your soul. Are you made capable of reflection, and are you not bound to reflect on your dependance, responsibility, criminality, and danger? Commune with your own heart, and ask if you can prove by scriptural evidence that you are in a state of salvation? Have you fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you in the gospel? Are you cordially attached to the Saviour? Do you rest with complacency in the way of salvation revealed in the divine word? Are you at peace with God?- Are your transgressions forgiven? your sins covered? Are you a child of God, and an heir of eternal life? If not, how much greater trouble should your sins be to you, than all your outward afflictions? How much more reason have you to be shocked that you should continue impenitent and negligent of the great salvation, than you have to repine at present troubles? Acquaint yourself with the Saviour, and be at peace. If you are reconciled to God, what reason have you to be thankful and submissive! Can any temporal loss counterbalance the ground you have for joy in God? Are not everlasting arms beneath you? Is not everlasting glory before you? Can any thing separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus your Lord? Will not the wisdom that was sufficient to plan the salvation of such a sinner, in perfect consistency with the divine perfections, suffice to manage the most intricate concerns of this life, and to make all things work together for good?

Dr. Ryland.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 14.

ASPIRING TO HEAVEN.

Lord of the worlds above. How pleasant and how fair The dwellings of thy love, Thy earthly temples are. To thine abode My heart aspires, With warm desires To see my God.

The sparrow for her young With pleasure seeks a nest, And wandering swallows long To find their wonted rest; My spirit faints With equal zeal To rise and dwell Among thy saints.

O happy souls that pray, Where God appoints to hear . O happy men that pay Their constant service there! They praise thee still; And happy they That love the way To Zion's hill

They go from strength to strength Through this dark vale of tears, 'Till each arrives at length, 'Till each in heaven appears: O glorious seat, When God our King Shall thither bring Our willing feet! Watts. 2 L

#### SEEK THE LORD. ACTS, CHAP. XVII.

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we

ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but

now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

# WORLDLY TREASURE WORTHLESS COMPARED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Happy are those who know how to prefer holiness to worldly enjoyments. To know God, and to possess a satisfied and grateful heart, are among the richest possessions we can enjoy in this world. These give us dignity here, while they conduct us to happiness hereafter. To accumulate riches, to heap hoards on hoards, in order that we may appear grand in the eyes of the world, is at best but idle vanity. Belief in a crucified Saviour offers us that which is infinitely more valuable to choose; that is, true wisdom.

Wherefore, then, should we weakly sigh for riches? These, at last, we can hold as but a loan; all the advantages they bring are evanescent, yet connected with them is there much that may seduce a mind not properly vigilant, not duly awake to the importance of preparing for eternity. We will not then covet affluence, we will not desire more than is sufficient. A too abundant supply of the good things of the world might render us negligent of heaven, assail our peace, and undermine our innocence. It would be weakness, as well as presumption, to ask our Maker for those things which, given, would render life full of care, the mind restless, affliction more annoying, and death terrible. We might forget God amidst earthly prospects of hope and felicity; we might cease to compassionate the unhappy, and thus wealth would prove the opposite of a blessing. Not then for the treasures of the world will we supplicate our God. We will rather desire to imitate Solomon, and pray to the Eternal that he may grant us an understanding heart, or with the Psalmist, that we shall be taught so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto true wisdom.

Should it be ours to gain such understanding, such wisdom, how happy must our future lives prove! We shall feel that we have no reason to envy the sons of wealth the luxuries in which they revel. Holy thoughts will more than console for all else beside; and while one unfortunate fellowcreature mourns the loss of property from desolating fire, and another from the selfish cruelty of a neighbour, we shall experience no such grief. Our riches will be such that no accident can injure, no robber snatch them away, and death, that reduces the opulent to the level of the most lowly, shall bestow upon us a degree of splendour, in comparision with which all human pomp is mean and ridiculous. Fountain of all goodness! grant us that grace which we feel surpasses every thing earthly in value. To thy care, O God! we commend our best interests. So thou art pleased to grant us peace of mind, we shall know how to value any boon, however trivial, which it may be

Let the world still covet gain; our souls, warmed by thy grace, informed by thy wisdom, shall regard with indifference the possessions of the great; and if poverty be our lot by thy decree, we will unrepiningly endure. But Oh! let us be wisely anxious to make those acquisitions which the sufferings of our Saviour have prepared for our solace, and which are reserved for us, in a happier state of existence.

ipplet state of existence.

thy good pleasure to bestow.

NO SIN IN HEAVEN.

There is no sin in heaven. Sin entered that world once. Perhaps a third part of the angels were seduced from their allegiance; but they were instantly banished from that high and holy place; and the holy angels justified the divine severity, and never had one hard thought of God for not sparing them. And when man was seduced from his obedience, the holy angels would have justified God in inflicting on him the sentence he had denounced: but when God deferred his anger, and refrained from cutting him off, they had no suspicion that he could be charged with partiality, or that he would ever dishonour himself: but they were all attention to the wonderful process of mercy; and this was increased as the plan of redemption was unfolded.

There is more connection between this little polluted world and the invisible world, than we generally realize. Obedient creatures of the highest order, feel an interest in all the divine conduct toward their fellow-creatures, though of an inferior race. All holy beings are pleased with whatever is done by the King of the universe. If it pleases God to interest himself in the welfare of any creature, however mean and unworthy, they will immediately become greatly interested in it too. Especially, they are deeply interested in the salvation of that race of creatures, to which God has been pleased to connect himself most closely, by assuming their nature into union with the person of the Son of God. Thus their love to man was founded, not on our relation to them, but our relation to God. Though they gave up their own associates as soon as they revolted from God, yet as soon as God disclosed his sovereign design of saving men, they coincided with the purpose of mercy. Thus, by the work of redemption, which is the greatest of all God's works, they learn his manifold wisdom. They see that God can glorify himself in the pardon of penitent sinners; but they know that no individual can partake of salvation without being brought to repentance. No one can come to Christ without turning his back on sin, nor see the need and beauty of his salvation without seeing the evil of sin.

Ryland.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 14.

A PRAYER TO BE SAVED FROM DESPONDENCY.

Hear me, O God, nor hide thy face, But answer, lest I die: Hast thou not built a throne of grace To hear when sinners cry?

My days are wasted like the smoke
Dissolving in the air:
My strength is dried, my heart is broke,
And sinking in despair.

Dark, dismal thoughts, and boding fears, Dwell in my troubled breast; While sharp reproaches wound my ears, Nor give my spirit rest.

But thou for ever art the same,
O my eternal God;
Ages to come shall know thy name,
And spread thy works abroad.

Thou wilt arise, and shew thy face, Nor will my Lord delay, Beyond th' appointed hour of grace, That long-expected day.

He hears his saints, he knows their cry,
And, by mysterious ways,
Redeems the prisoners doomed to die,
And fills their tongues with praise.

Watts.

GOD'S WAYS WITH MAN. JOB, CHAP. XXXIII.

14 For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon man, in slumberings upon the bed;

16 Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

17 That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

18 He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

19 He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the

multitude of his bones with strong pain:

20 So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. 21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life

to the destroyers.

23 If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness.

27 He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not;

28 He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. 29 Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.

# REPENTANCE IS THE ROAD TO HEAVEN.

A solemn thought, full of anxiety, presents itself to our minds. Another year of our life is passed. Are we better to-day than we were twelvemonths ago? Let us examine ourselves, and ask our hearts, By what good actions has the last year been distinguished. That year is now registered, with the deeds performed during its course, in the awful record of the Almighty. Are there any in which we can venture to exult, as a set-off against many which we cannot but deeply Great injustice has been committed repent? towards others, and towards ourselves, and with sorrow we recal the sinful inclinations to which, in numerous instances, we have yielded. have treated our fellows with severity, we have been haughty, lustful, envious, and mean. How have our vows been kept? how have we proved that we we were really penetrated with the sacred truths of religion? Will not conscience sternly accuse us on the bed of death? Can we hope that the Judge of all the earth will look upon us with favour and compassion? Can we hope for mercy?

Yet let us not despond, if we cannot recal the time that we have wasted, let us now place our hopes on a gracious Redeemer. The decrees of God, as they have ever been, remain immutable; he permits us to hope; and what man sows, that shall he reap.

That we still breathe, is a proof of the forbearance of our heavenly Father. God does nothing without an object; and since it is his pleasure that we should still survive, let us not despair. None can comfort us like our Father in heaven. He has consoled us heretofore, and will do so still. The days which are coming shall witness our regeneration.

As a father taketh compassion upon his children, so does God take compassion on all sinners who are penitent. If an earthly father can forget the transgressions of his offspring, when he offends no longer, knowing those transgressions have already subjected him to punishment, so can our celestial Father pardon us, knowing, as he does, that we can commit no sin which is not attended with painful consequences.

Let us listen to the voice of scripture, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Find not these words an echo in our hearts? Every sinner is aptly compared to a corpse, for all that is great and immortal is dead in him. Everything connected with this world alone, is dead, like the dust from which it springs, and to which it returns. It is only in what is celestial that life can be found.

Our Lord has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The sinner shall not perish; our great Father himself calls upon him, through the voice of nature, saying, "Return to God, despair not, heaven will rejoice at thy return, if thou repentest: if thou becomest the friend of God.

We must guard against perplexing ourselves with ideas of that which is, and that which is not, in reality returning to God, and living in Christ. We are not to presume that the victory is won, because we are sad at heart, value not the joys of life, and talk of the love of Jesus, and the Lamb that was sacrificed for our iniquity. Sinners who by their vicious courses have destroyed their health with their fortunes, will sometimes act that self-deceiving part. Their repentance, however, is not love of God, but a wretched consciousness of the punishment which awaits them in the world to come.

How can the sinner return, in reality, to his offended Maker? how can he assure himself of the friendship of his Redeemer? The Son of God himself has told us what we are to do. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

And "What shall I do to be saved?" asked one who ardently desired the favour of the Redeemer; and this was the reply, "Love God above all things, and thy neighbour as thyself."

"Oh father, father! I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;" so said the prodigal son, in the parable of Jesus, to his parent; and that parent pressed his son to his bosom, and said, "This my son, that was dead, is alive again, was lost, and is found."

Eternal Father! we have sinned in thy sight. and are no more worthy to be called thy children. But thy mercy is great, greater than our guilt, and thou willest not the death of a sinner, but had rather he should turn from his wickedness When invisible dangers have surrounded, thou hast preserved us, and still we are able to rejoice, and turn to thee with grateful hearts. We will not despond; we will not believe that salvation is beyond our reach; we will trust to thy bounty to pardon our weaknesses, hoping, for the time to come, to act more perfectly in accordance with thy will. Reject us not, O Lord! Pardon our sins, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. For the sake of our Saviour, thy Son, Jesus Christ, grant us thy mercy!

# CHARITY DUE TO CHRISTIANS FROM CHRISTIANS.

All Christians ought to consider their worldly good, in a certain sense, as the common property of their brethren. A certain part, they may, and ought to appropriate to the support, and convenience of themselves, and theirs; and even, it may be, to the maintenance of that rank, which the subordination of society, makes it expedient, that they should fill: but there is a part, which, by the laws of God, and nature, belongs to their brethren; who, if they cannot implead them for its wrongful detention, before an earthly tribunal, have their right and title to it, written by the finger of God himself, in the records of the gospel, and will see it established at the judgment day.

Amongst those evangelical virtues, and graces, in which the Church, of these days, presents, but, a faint, and cold adumbration of the primitive household of faith, I fear, there is not any, in which, we fall more short of the original, than in charity. Let no man congratulate himself, upon having attained the fulness, and perfectness of Christian charity, till he can say, with sincerity, and exemplify that sincerity in his deeds, "that nought that he possesses, is his own," but, that he has all things, for the common advantage of himself and his brethren.

He, who has given us the good things of this life, does not, peremptorily, enjoin upon us, the sacrifice of all we possess; nor, did he, even in the time of the apostles: the liberality of the first believers, was a spontaneous liberality; and the giving up of all, that they had, was not an indispensable proof, of their fellowship with the saints. But, what is given, in the name of Christian charity, as an offering to God, for and through Christ, must be given, freely, and sincerely,—from pure, unmixed motives; not with a desire, to obtain the credit of liberality, and with no vain attempt, to impose upon our own consciences, and to make a compromise with God, by pretending to offer him, as much as we can afford to give, when we might, and ought to give a great deal more.

May we all be actuated, and supported by the same spirit, which enabled the apostles, to set forward the cause of the gospel; a spirit of zeal and of charity: of zeal for the truth, as it is in Jesus; of charity towards those, who are in error, and of fervent gratitude towards God, who has been pleased to impart to us,—unworthy as we are of the least of his gifts,—the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Bishop Blomfield.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 15.

HAPPY ARE THEY THAT FEAR GOD.

That man is blest who stands in awe Of God, and loves his sacred law; His seed on earth shall be renowned. And with successive honours crowned.

His house, the seat of wealth, shall be An inexhausted treasury; His justice, free from all decay, Shall blessings to his heirs convey.

The soul that's filled with virtue's light, Shines brightest in affliction's night: To pity the distressed inclined, As well as just to all mankind.

Beset with threatening dangers round, Unmoved shall he maintain his ground: The sweet remembrance of the just Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust.

Watts.

THE WARNING TO SINNERS. MATTHEW, CHAP. XXV.

31 ¶ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

25 Nelsod and we elethed more I was sight and we resited.

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these,

ve did it not to me.

# SLEEP OF THE BODY COMPARED TO THAT OF THE SOUL.

Devoid of sense and animation, incapable of avoiding approaching danger, we have passed the

night in sleep.

How mournfully does this state of the body image the weakness and irresolution which our souls often prove! We forget the goodness of our Creator, and the wandering mind is deaf to those pious lessons which, through his mercy, it is yet ours to receive. Negligent of virtue, we suffer ourselves to be carried away by the mean temptations of life. As a dreamer, or sleepwalker, we move unconscious, and indifferent to our eternal destiny. Full many of our days, of our years, have been thus wasted. Though late, let us now shake off this deplorable listlessness, and consider what are the duties imposed upon us by returning day.

This is the time when we ought to start from slumber, and rise from the couch on which we have thoughtlessly reclined. Nature revives in animated beauty, and all around glows with freshened energy and renovated life. Let our souls move in accord with everything near us, nor suffer the culpable listlessness we have lately known, again to prevail. Ought Christians to pass their earthly days in vain imaginings? Let us act a nobler part, and exercise, with vigour and judgment, those powers which the Almighty, in his bounty, has bestowed. Too often, in the early hours of the opening morning, has God called to us, " Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead!" and been unregarded. This must not be repeated: let us listen to the voice which would rouse us to act like rational beings. Let us open our eyes to the dangers by which we are encompassed, and those which weakness, and neglect of duty, may soon add to them. Each returning day imposes upon us a fresh struggle. We must rise, and bravely combat, that we may not lose a crown of glory. Still unmindful of our duty, how will the spectres of our vanished years torture our spirits, if, at a later period of our life, we awake to the truth, when the hand of death is upon us! Contemplating this, let us tremble for our condition: but unless thou art pleased, Oh

Lord! to assist our weakness, how can we escape the danger? It is thing to give our bodies the strength requisite to shake off drowsy slumbers: Oh! deign to impart that salutary determination which may effectually rouse our souls to burst from the snares of sin. Look down in compassion upon us! for, unaided by thee, we are helpless, and can move to no good end. Give us strength and resolution, that we may better employ our time. Enable us duly to comprehend our sad condition, and the magnitude of thy bounty, that our hearts may glow with zeal in the cause of virtue, that we may improve every opportunity for seeking salvation. Quicken and purify our hearts this day, that we may duly reverence thy word, and recognize thy goodness, that we may submit to those visitations which thou mayest be pleased to send, with patient resignation, acknowledge thy forbearance, be truly penitent for our transgressions, and fortify our hearts against neglecting thy ordinances for the time to come, that so we may eventually obtain thy favour and protection. Should we, unhappily, once more relapse into negligence, let, Oh Father! thy potent arm snatch us from the danger, that we may not die eternally, but find everlasting joy, through our Lord and Saviour.

## PIETY OF FORMER TIMES.

Men of old looked on themselves as they stood by the examples and precedents of martyrs, and compared their piety to the life of St. Paul, and estimated their zeal by flames of the Boanerges, St. James and his brother, and the bishops were thought reprovable, as they fell short of the ordinary government of St. Peter and St. John; and the assemblies of Christians were so holy, that every meeting had religion enough to hallow a house, and convert it to a church; and every day of feasting was a communion, and every fastingday was a day of repentance and alms, and every day of thanksgiving was a day of joy and alms; and religion began all their actions, and prayer consecrated them, and they ended in charity, and were not polluted with design; they despised the world heartily, and pursued after heaven greedily; they knew no ends but to serve God, and to be saved; and had no designs on their neighbours, but to lead them to God and to felicity; till Satan, full of envy to see such excellent days, mingled covetousness and ambition within the throngs and conventions of the church, and a vice crept into an office; and then the mutual confidence grew less, and so charity was lessened; and heresies crept in, and then faith began to be sullied; and pride crept in, and then men snatched at offices, not for the work, but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more than God and the church; till at last it came to that pass where now it is, that the clergy live lives no better than the laity, and the laity are stooped to imitate the evil customs of strangers and enemies of Christianity; so that we should think religion in a good condition, if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an ordinary, even, and just life, without the scandal and alloys of a great impiety

Jeremy Taylor.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 15.

CELEBRATION OF GOD'S WORKS.

Ye tribes of Adam, join
With heaven, and earth, and seas,
And offer notes divine
To your Creator's praise.
Ye holy throng
Of angels bright,
In worlds of light
Begin the song.

Thou sun with dazzling rays, And moon that rul'st the night, Shine to your Maker's praise, With stars of twinkling light. His power declare, Ye floods on high, And clouds that fly In empty air.

The shining worlds above In glorious order stand, Or in swift courses move By his supreme command. He spake the word, And all their frame From nothing came To praise the Lord.

He moved their mighty wheels In unknown ages past, And each his word fulfils While time and nature last. In different ways His works proclaim His wondrous name, And speak his praise.

# CONFIDENCE IN GOD. PSALM XXVII.

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident

4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set

me upon a rock.

- 6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.
- 7 Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
- 8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.
- 9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me. O God of my salvation.

#### MAN SHOULD SEEK THE TRUE LIGHT.

"Darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." These sublime words were those of the Creator of the universe. The immortal grandeur of the great fiat, "Let there be light, and there was light," might fill the bosom of a savage with wonder and awe, and compel acknowledgment of the noblest image of the Omnipotent Creator. At his word, the latent materials of light withdrew from darkness, and, by their astonishing splendour, gave to created beings a view of the magnificence of creation.

All the grandest objects of earth, if veiled in everlasting night, would be worthless and insignificant. In light, we recognize the most glorious and enlivening element of nature. It is the soul of being, incomprehensible in itself, but admirable in its effects, and obvious to every human eye. To nothing, therefore, can the Creator be more fitly compared, as we find he is, in many parts of the bible, than light. Light is often figuratively used to signify the Deity.

But for us, when we behold the sun and the light, with our corporeal eyes, let us desire spiritually to view the glorious works of the Creator's hand.

The Almighty, from whom all good proceeds, is the source of light. To him let us address our supplications, that he will condescend to bestow upon us, not only all that is needful to our wellbeing here, but all that may fit us for a world to come. Our blessed Redeemer is the great orb of light, of justice for the world; and the light of his gospel enables us to seek and to discover the way to everlasting happiness. It must, then, be our ambition, in his school, to study the task imposed upon us by our heavenly Father. From his light we shall be enabled to see new light, and as the moon is irradiated by the orb of day, so shall our darkened minds be illumined by the light of revelation. Would it not be weakness to imagine that at noon-day, we could see our path better by the flickering ray of a feeble taper than by the brightness of the sun? Not less preposterous must it be in us to prefer shaping our course by human wisdom, to seeking assistance from on high, or to deem our reason superior to the bible. As well might we prefer the twilight to the glory of the day, as presume that we can be aided by the creature, better than by his Creator. In the

words of Samuel, we say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Can we suppose that the Supreme Being would have prepared for the mortal eve, an object so transcendantly grand as the sun, and yet left the mental eye in profound darkness? He has bestowed on us an inward light, that of the soul—a capacity illuminated by his holy word. Jesus is the true light, that will shine on all who live; and without his precepts we should be wholly unequal to the most important concerns even of this state of being. The light of grace, of wisdom, of truth and life, of joy and comfort, of faith and holiness, of the glorified Father of all, all are provided by him. God grant that our souls may profit from it, be sustained, comforted, and inspired; and grant, O Lord! that, above all things, we may be animated and purified by thy word, to the end that we may commence a life of piety, till, more and more elevated, by abstinence from sin, we are capable of flights worthy of spirits created for eternity, so that in that conviction we may enjoy the blissful hope that we shall, after this life, find a glorious home above the sky.

And now, Oh Lord, at the close of another day, we approach with our humble homage, to entreat that, by thy gracious favour, we may compose ourselves to rest in the happy consciousness that, to the best of our ability, we have fulfilled our duty. For all thy mercies, we tender our thanks, and especially for those gracious institutions which are found in the kingdom of thy Son, by which our souls are taught, comforted, and

improved.

Majestic Being! Eternal Uncreated Light, from whom all wisdom and true knowledge are derived, let the beams of thy glory enlighten our souls, that we may learn to honour thee, and Jesus our Saviour.

We implore thee, as did Solomon, that ours may be the possession of a wise and pure heart. Superfluities, wealth, worldly distinctions, or other temporal advantages, we ask not: thou seest how far these may be suitable for us, and thy goodness will bestow what is really for our advantage. To one prayer, Oh God! we entreat thy especial attention, that thy grace for forgiveness of sins may be ours, with peace of mind, a satisfied bosom, and an earnest love for truth and goodness. These blessings we implore thee to grant; for all else we are comparatively indifferent.

Not only for ourselves, but for others, do we

supplicate thy bounty; bless all the children of men, and grant that those who have sinned may return to the right path, and that the followers of our Lord and Saviour may continue to be augmented. Grant that all who are truly penitent, may be consoled by thy word, relieved in their distress, and saved from peril. Dry the tears of thy worshippers who pine in misery, comfort those who are on the point of death, and let truth prevail, till the progress of virtue may render her a joyous image of heaven. Aid our efforts to live only to thee, let thy light shine upon us, and let the knowledge of Christ be spread over the whole earth, that all may gain that bliss which thou, in thy goodness, through him, hast prepared for repentant man, in thy eternal home.

DAZZLING SPLENDOUR OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

Wonder not, therefore, Lindamor, that my weak eyes dare not dwell long upon an object, which they cannot steadfastly gaze on long without being dazzled: and do not marvel, that I scruple not to use seeming hyperboles in the mention of perfections, which make the highest hyperboles but seeming ones: both God's nature and his word declaring him to be exalted above all blessing and praise. If it were seasonable, Lindamor, to entertain ourselves but with those attributes of God, which are legible or conspicuous in creation; we might there discern the admirable traces of such immense power, such unsearchable wisdom, and such exuberant goodness, as may justly ravish us to an amazement at them, rather than a bare admiration of them. And I must needs acknowledge, Lindamor, that when with bold telescopes I survey the old and newly-discovered stars and planets that adorn the upper region of the world; and when with excellent microscopes I discern in otherwise invisible objects, the unimitable subtilty of nature's curious workmanship; and when, in aword, by the help of anatomical knives, and the light of chemical furnaces, I study the book of nature, and consult the glosses of Aristotle, Epicurus, Paracelsus, Harvey, Helmont, and other learned expositors of that instructive volume; I find myself oftentimes reduced to exclaim with the psalmist, "How manifold are thy works, O Lord! in wisdom hast thou made them all!" And when I have been losing myself in admiration of what I understand not, but enough to admire, and not to comprehend; I am often obliged to interrupt or break off my enquiries, by applying to the works of God's creation the expression used by St. Paul, of those of his providence, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways untraceable!"

Boyle.

## MORNING.-FEBRUARY 16.

TRUST WHOLLY IN GOD.

Who place in Sion's God their trust, Like Sion's rock shall stand; Like her immoveable be fixed, By his almighty hand. Look how the hills on every side Jerusalem enclose; So stands the Lord around his saints, To guard them from their foes.

Be good, O righteous God, to those
Who righteous deeds affect;
The heart that innocence retains,
Let innocence protect.

Milton.

THE BLESSED EFFECTS OF TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, PROVERBS, CHAP. XII.

17 He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

18 There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword:

but the tongue of the wise is health.

19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a

lying tongue is but for a moment.

20 Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.

21 There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked

shall be filled with mischief.

22 Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they

that deal truly are his delight.

23 A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

24 The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

25 Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.

26 The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

27 The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

28 In the way of righteousness is life; and in the path way thereof there is no death.

## TO LIVE AND DIE IN CHRIST IS HAPPINESS.

Solely to be occupied with Christ, is a duty which we ought to regard as a privilege. Than such a determination, what can be more rational? We will this day devote our thoughts to him, and bear in mind the manifold obligations imposed by such a resolution. To live and to die in Jesus, we ought ever to remember, is happiness. Both in his life and death we may rejoice, and looking at the sublime example he has set, we ought to glow with the warmest gratitude. What effort could have been made by him, to render us his own, more unquestionably great than that which we behold in his works on earth? The life which he led subjected him to miserable privation, dreadful persecution, and eventually to a cruel death of shame. Could a greater proof be afforded of his love for us, than he thus manifested, descending from heaven to earth, exchanging glory for ignominy, celestial bliss for earthly woe? Cold and unfeeling must that bosom be, which is not filled with reverential love, when these instances of bounty are recalled. Shall we, in dull insensibility, close our hearts against that admiration

which must naturally grow on reviewing conduct so sublime and benevolent? The blessings secured to us are too great, Oh Saviour of the world! for thinking men to regard them with indifference. It is in our power to become holy, and being so, we must be happy. In this world, what unalloyed felicity can we know, unless animated by thy Spirit, and sustained by faith, as humble followers of Christ, we attempt to pursue that path which he has pointed out for the guidance of mortals. The curse of sin cannot fall on the true worshippers of our Lord; they are not the weak slaves of passion; they do not timidly faint at the thought of pain, nor are they terrified at the approach of death. Oh! should our weakness tempt us to return to sin, let the recollection of the sorrows, of the agony, which mortal transgressions caused the Redeemer to endure, wake nobler feelings, and compel us to adhere to virtue. When we are so forgetful as to repine at the insignificant troubles which we encounter, may our hearts learn to dwell on the self-denial known to thee, O Christ! through thy earthly career, and the dreadful sufferings which it was thine to experience on the cross, and then let thoughts of thy gracious intercession for man, take full possession of our whole souls, to prove, in life or in death, our richest comfort, our most unfailing support.

To die in Christ must be joy. The contemplation of his love renders us indifferent to mortal estimation. Be it ours to remain his, under all circumstances, now and for evermore. We will withdraw ourselves from the idle dreams that a wandering imagination may have learned to cherish; we will abjure all earthly cares, and our wishes and hopes shall incessantly turn to him who suffered on Calvary. He shall be the object of our thoughts, and the joy of our hearts. When the final moment of mortal existence approaches, and memory and reflection, like a lamp expiring from want of oil, are fast fading, the last remains of both shall be occupied by thy greatness and thy goodness to man. Quitting this life in thy faith, we shall enter into another state of being, with the extatic conviction that in thy presence we must experience joy that will know no end. Oh! what a delicious thought, that we may live eternally, near thy radiant throne! The vastness of the idea overpowers our feeble minds; but hereafter we shall duly comprehend how blissful the lot, how exalted the condition of that soul that lives but for Jesus.

#### A LIVING AND A DEAD FAITH.

That there is no acceptance for any of the sons of Adam with the just and holy God, but through Jesus Christ as our righteousness received by faith; and that in this concern works of every kind are absolutely excluded, is the capital doctrine of the gospel. It is not only clearly asserted in innumerable passages both of the Old Testament and the New, but is St. Paul's express subject and design in his epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. Though he was yielding and compliant in many things of less importance, and was willing to become all things to all men, yet he would not give place, no not for an hour, to any who offered to invalidate this foundation-truth. He declares, that to mix anything, to contend for any qualification or observance, as of necessary influence, to concur with the perfect work of Christ in the justification of a sinner, is to darken, alter, and destroy the gospel which he preached: and denounces an anathema against every one who should be guilty of this presumption, yea, though he should be (if such a thing were possible) an angel from heaven. How cordially he rested his own hope upon the truth which he proposed to others, he declares elsewhere: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ; and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith."

If this is the scriptural doctrine, let each of you examine on what ground you stand. Has God appointed one way of salvation? and will any of you dare to propose another? This would be both wicked and dangerous:—"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." You may please yourselves now with what you account your good works; but when God shall "lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet," none will be able to abide his appearance, but those who can plead a righteousness perfectly answerable to the law's demands, which can only be

found in Jesus Christ, the righteous one.

And as this doctrine is of so great and essential importance, beware how you listen to any other. Take heed how you hear; be not influenced by the names, characters, or stations of men, when the salvation of your souls is at stake. Prize the liberty, which as Protestants and Britons you enjoy, of bringing every doctrine to the trial of God's word, and freely use it. I account it my honour and happiness that I preach to a free people, who have the Bible in their hands. To your Bibles I appeal. I entreat, I charge you to receive nothing upon my word, any farther than I prove it from the word of God; and bring every preacher, and every sermon that you hear to the same standard. If this is the truth, you had need to be well established in it; for it is not the current and fashionable doctrine of the times. Let me then farther recommend to you (it is a direction our Lord has given) to examine doctrines by their effects: "By their fruits ye shall know them." The truths of God, when faithfully preached, in humble dependence upon his blessing, will be attested by his power. At such times, and in such places, a visible change will soon be observable in some one or other of the hearers; they cease to do evil, they learn to do well; they acknowledge God in all their ways, and glorify him before men, by living according to his precepts. And if you ask them the reason of this change, they will freely ascribe it to the blessing of God upon that sort of preaching, which by too many is accounted foolishness.

Newton.

## EVENING.—FEBRUARY 16.

THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD NEVER LOSE HIS CONFIDENCE

No change of times shall ever shock My firm affection, Lord, to thee; For thou hast always been a rock. A fortress and defence to me.

Thou my deliv'rer art, my God; My trust is in thy mighty power; Thou art my shield from foes abroad, At home my safeguard and my tower.

To thee I'll still address my pray'r, (To whom all praise we justly owe;) So shall I by thy watchful care Be guarded from my treach'rous foe.

His subtle rage had near prevailed, When I distressed and friendless lay; But still, when other succours failed, God was my firm support and stay.

THE POWER OF FAITH. MATTHEW XX1.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosannah to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosannah in the

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was

moved, saying, Who is this?
11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he

hungered. 19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying,

How soon is the fig-tree withered away !

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, he shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer be-

lieving, ye shall receive.

## GOD WILL CONSOLE THE CHRISTIAN FOR ALL SORROWS.

The Christian mind most awake to duty, ought to know most happiness. Such, however, is not invariably the case, for though religion breathes heavenly peace on those who respect God's ordinances, so that in tribulation they are not miserable, but have an anchor on which they can rely while the tempest rages, a friendly star to guide them through the night of sorrow; yet still there are moments when they forget the advantages of their

position, when their anchor seems to lose its hold, and the light above is seen no more. O yes! moments of sadness will occur when not even the consciousness that, to the best of our ability, we have fulfilled our duty, will calm our bosoms. Nay, the reflection will even seem to aggravate them. For us the cup of sorrow will seem to overflow, and the weakness of our nature must bend beneath an overwhelming weight of woe. Such was that memorable hour when the bloody sweat hung on the brow of our Redeemer, and when from the earth he called to the great Creator above, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me," and such was that still more awful moment when in faltering accents the dving Redeemer sighed on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Sufferings extraordinary in their nature will, in some instances, cause our faith to fail. Though humbly resigned to submit to the will of God, with sincere confidence that his paternal love will eventually dry our tears, we still, though conscious of kindly sympathizing in the sorrows of others, find miserable poverty our lot, while the heartless scoffer exults in the lavished gifts of fortune, and lives in splendid luxury, a stranger to Then the fainting humble Christian will be tempted to ask, "Of what avail is virtue? of what importance is prayer? of what use is it to love others? What benefits result from the sacrifices which I have made to duty, since vice exults in greatness, and suffering merit is despised? since the atheist triumphs, and the true worshipper of God is left to mourn in solitude and sorrow?"

Thus will the forlorn one sigh, and in the bitterness of his heart be tempted to exclaim, "All, all forsake me! God himself seems to have withdrawn his protecting care, and to have forgotten the sufferer in his woe." Then what are the arrangements of this life, since the governor of the world seems himself in arms against all that is recognized as virtue and religion. Can a good, supreme, eternal being, doom unoffending spirits to misery? Can he reward sin and exalt crime? Can these things be? Why, why have I been taught by the precepts of Christ to value a pure heart above all earthly possessions, seeing that heart is doomed to the greatest and most intolerable affliction?

It cannot be denied that there are situations which lead the superficial observer to doubt the goodness of a superintending deity. There are times and seasons in which we could suspect that

we have formed a false estimate of the value of piety, when our confidence is shaken, and our minds are the prey of unmitigated despondency.

It is in such moments of anguish that a sweet and cheering voice is heard from above, to raise the sinking heart while it breathes these cheering words. "Come unto me all ve that are heavy laden, and I will give ye rest." After all, no comfort, no repose, can be obtained like that which religion offers in the name of our Saviour. storms of life may rage with frightful violence, we may see no prospect of their abating, no gleam of starry light to guide the pensive traveller in his wanderings. The climax of sorrow may be supplied while we are struggling for life and death, but our Almighty Creator is omnipotent still, and all will, in the end, be relieved by eternal love. The comforts which are withdrawn from us in this life, will tend to the welfare of our immortal souls: that which is perishable, and which we know we might not be permitted to retain, is all we can lose, but the soul thereby is brought nearer to its sublime Author, and has gained new treasures which will remain to it for ever.

In hours of the bitterest sorrow, O Christian, still retain unshaken courage and undoubting faith. Thy gracious Father will not leave thee, will not forsake thee, if thou dost not forsake him. It was never promised that earthly pleasures should endure for ever. Hast thou, like Job, lost all thy possessions? hast thou to mourn the fall of all that were dear to thee? still what is thy loss,—dust, merely dust. Be resigned and soothed, and let this be thy constant thought, "The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Retaining faith and proper resolution thou hast nothing to deplore. God remains with thee, and he is all in all. He will not forsake thee, for thou art of the number of his children, and one of the objects of his love. He will sustain thee even when the world is vanishing from thy fading eyes, and the outspread wings of death overshadow thee. Thou art not lost, for thy soul is eternal. Happy is it for thee, if at the end of thy career, thou canst exclaim with a satisfied heart, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Does the sad mourner weep over the remains of her husband, or her child, of her father, of her friend. What if the objects of tenderest affection have been withdrawn. While the tears of nature flow, let reason ask, "what hast thou lost?" Say, what has been buried, was it not dust? Can the immortal spirit know dissolution, and moulder in the grave? Why are the streaming eyes fixed on the ground? That which is fled, and for which thou fondly seekest, is not there. Look to the heaven above, let thy mind reflect on the immensity of God's magnificent kingdom, and feel that to that has the dear lost one been removed. Why gaze on the sepulchre? the dust there deposited was but a borrowed garment, and formed no part of the eternal spirit. That, has "finished its course below, has fought the good fight, and has kept the faith." It has won for itself a nobler existence, has gained a crown of immortality.

Why then, O gracious God and Father, should we know despondency in the hour of trial? Thou art still our merciful Creator. In the fulness of thy love impart to us that strength which may enable us patiently to endure the severest visitations reserved for us, feeling that here we are but dust, but that, as thy children, duly observing thy commandments, we shall eventually gain a bliss-

ful home in heaven.

#### SACRIFICES IN EXPIATION OF SIN.

It was a custom among nations contiguous to Judæa, and particularly among the Egyptians, to set a seal upon a victim that was deemed proper for sacrifice. With this custom the Jews could not be unacquainted; and it is possible that similar precautions were in use among themselves, especially as they were so strictly enjoined to have their sacrifices without spot and without blemish. To such a usage Jesus Christ is supposed to have alluded, when speaking of the sacrifice of himself, he says, Him hath God the Father sealed. (John vi. 27, 51.) 'Infinite justice found Jesus Christ to be without spot or blemish, and therefore sealed, pointed out and accepted him as a proper sacrifice and atonement for the sin of the whole world. Collate Heb. vii. 26—28. Eph. v. 27. Pet. iii. 14. and especially Heb. ix. 13, 14. For, if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth,-how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works.

The victim thus chosen, being found immaculate, was led up to the altar by the person offering the sacrifice; who laid his hand upon its head, on which he leaned with all his strength; and, while the sacrifice was offering, said some parstrength; and, while the sacrince was one ing, the ticular prayers; and if several persons united in offering the same victim, they put their hands upon it in succession. this imposition of hands the person presenting the victim acknowledged the sacrifice to be his own; that he loaded it with his iniquities; that he offered it as an atonement for his sins; that he was worthy of death because he had sinned, having forfeited his life by violating the law of God; and that he entreated God to accept the life of the innocent animal in the place of his own. In this respect the victims of the Old Testament were types of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, (John i. 39.), and on whom Jehovah in the fulness of time laid the iniquity of us all. (Isa. liii. 6. with 1 Pet. ii. 24.

When the victim devoted to the sacrifice was brought be-

fore the altar, the priest, having implored the divine favour and acceptance by prayer, poured wine upon its head: and after the performance of this solemn act of religion, which was termed a libation, the victim was instantly led to the slaughter. To this circumstance St. Paul, knowing the time of his martyrdom to be very near, has a very striking allusion; representing this rite, which immediately preceded the death of the victim, as already performed upon him, implying that he was now devoted to death, and that his dissolution would speedily follow. I am now ready to be offered, says he (2 Tim. iv. 6.); literally, I am already poured out as a libation; the time of my departure is at hand.

Horne.

# MORNING.-FEBRUARY 17.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE ALL-SUFFICIENT.

Lo, the lilies of the field,
How their leaves instruction yield!
Hark to nature's lesson given
By the cheerful birds of heaven!
Every bush and tufted tree
Warbles sweet philosophy;
"Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow:
God provideth for the morrow!

"Say, with richer crimson glows
The kingly mantle than the rose?
Say, have kings more wholesome fare
Than we poor citizens of air?
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily.
Mortal fly from doubt and sorrow,
God provideth for the morrow!

"One there lives whose guardian eye Guides our humble destiny; One there lives, who, Lord of all, Keeps our feathers lest they fall: Pass we blithely then, the time, Fearless of the snare and lime, Free from doubt and faithless sorrow: God provideth for the morrow!"

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NONE SEEK RELIEF FROM CHRIST IN VAIN. MATT. VIII.

1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touching him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately his leprocy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, do this, and he doeth it

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac,

and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and

as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed the selfsame hour.

14 ¶ And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose and ministered unto them.

16 ¶ When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick :

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare

our sicknesses.

#### THE LOVE AND SACRIFICES OF JESUS.

With solemn meditation and grateful wonder, let our souls contemplate the love of our Saviour Jesus, let us in thought pass to Bethlehem, and there behold the Son of God far removed from his native glory, helpless and resting in squalid misery. Thence let us pursue his steps through his earthly career, mark the unbounded love for suffering humanity with which he relieved the sick, soothed the afflicted, and pardoned the evil Behold him manifesting the sublimest benevolence for man, yet oppressed to the death by man, mocked, insulted, and brutally tortured. Let us dwell on the awful scene of Gethsemane. let us contemplate the burning tears which fell from his feverish eyes, hear the groans which burst from his sinking heart; and more than all, that touching but humble prayer, in which, seeking relief, he resigned himself to his father's will, while yielding himself an unresisting victim to suffer a death of excruciating agony.

Thence let us pass with him to Golgotha, the scene in which the holy sufferer was most gloriously distinguished. There let us contemplate the power of divine love, while we see Christ, the representative of the Almighty Creator of the universe, stripped and suspended from the cross between two murderers, pierced with nails, and

encompassed with executioners.

Gaze on him in these horrid circumstances. and still mark the firm unshrinking character of his love for man: the same love which induced him to assume the human form, enables him to sustain the sharpest pangs with unvielding fortitude. Look at him writhing in mortal anguish. and, in the extremity of his sufferings, hear his high minded, god-like supplication for those. who, with mad derision, mocked his pains, and

triumphed in his woe.

Surely when such a scene is before us, our souls cannot remain unaffected. Can we think it too much to love him who has loved us so sincerely? Our gracious Redeemer asks no more than this. and O, what love and devotion can adequately respond to mercy so extended, in acknowledgement of bounty so vast, as that which we have to acknowledge. Sincere affection, however feeble the mind, is all our Lord requires. Can we refuse to sacrifice to him the idle hopes of life, our vain inclinations and irrational wishes? O let us resolve henceforth, and ever, to look up to him with just homage, to place on him all our reliance, to devote ourselves to his glory. Even in the passing day, let the effects of our love for him who died for us, be conspicuous in all our actions. Let us constantly bear in mind how the Saviour loved us. Let us enquire of our hearts, if the course which, in any case, we are about to adopt, if the act which we resolve to perform, be in accordance with those feelings his gracious condescension ought to inspire. Not for a moment let us forget, that all the enjoyments which may be ours this day, come through the accepted sacrifice offered by our Redeemer for offending man. Cherishing this thought, and stedfastly giving up our minds to obedience and devout gratitude, our example will prove a benefit to others, while we shall have to rejoice in Christ, before his Father's throne, through all eternity.

#### CHRIST WILL RECEIVE ALL SINNERS.

There is many a sad wretch given by the Father to Jesus Christ: but not one of them all is despised or slighted by

It is said of those that the Father hath given to Christ, that they have done worse than the Heathen; that they were murderers, thieves, drunkards, unclean persons, and what not: but he has received them, washed them, and saved them. A fit emblem of this sort, is that wretched instance mentioned in the 16th of Ezekiel, that was cast out in a stinking condition, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born; a creature in such a wretched condition, that no eye pitied, to do any of the things there mentioned unto it, or to have compassion upon it: no eye but his that speaketh in the text.

And him. Let him be as red as blood, let him be as red as crimson; some men are blood-red sinners, crimson sinners, sinners of a double dye; dipped and dipped again, before they come to Jesus Christ. Art thou that readest these lines, such a one? Speak out, man. Art thou such a one? and art thou now coming to Jesus Christ for the mercy of justification that thou mightest be made white in his blood, and be

covered with his righteousness: fear not, for as much as thy coming betokeneth, that thou art of the number of them that the Father hath given to Christ; for he will in no wise cast thee out. "Come now, saith Christ, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool,"

And him. There was many a strange him came to Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh; but he received them all, without turning any away " Speaking unto them of the kingdom of God, and healing such as had need of healing." These words, and him, are therefore words to be wondered at: that not one of them, who by virtue of the Father's gift, and drawing, are coming to Jesus Christ, I say, that not one of them, whatever they have been, whatever they have done, should be rejected, or set by, but admitted to a share in his saving grace. It is said in Luke, that the people "wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." Now this is one of his gracious words: these words are like drops of honey, as it is said, "Pleasant words, are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." These are gracious words indeed, even as full as a faithful and merciful high priest could speak them. Luther saith, "When Christ speaketh he hath a mouth as wide as heaven and earth." That is, to speak fully to the encouragement of every sinful him that is coming to Jesus Christ. And that this word is certain, hear how himself confirms it: "Heaven and earth," saith he, "shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Bunyan.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 17.

### RELIGIOUS HARMONY.

Oh! sweet as vernal dews that fill The closing buds on Zion's hill, When evening clouds draw thither-So sweet, so heavenly, 'tis to see The members of one family Live peacefully together.

The children, like the lily flowers, On which descend the suns and showers, Their hues of beauty blending ;-The parents, like the willow boughs, On which the lovely foliage grows, Their friendly shade extending.

But leaves the greenest will decay-And flowers the brightest fade away, When autumn winds are sweeping; And be the household e'er so fair, The hand of death will soon be there, And turn the scene to weeping.

Yet leaves again will clothe the trees, And lilies wave beneath the breeze, When spring comes smiling hither; And friends who parted at the tomb, May yet renew their loveliest bloom, And meet in heaven together.

GOD WILL GIVE HIS BLESSING TO THOSE WHO RESPECT HIS ORDINANCE. ISAIAH, CHAP. LVIII.

1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

3 ¶ Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make

your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy

rereward.

9 Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and

thy darkness be as the noon day:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach,

The restorer of paths to dwell in.

13 ¶ If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of

the LORD hath spoken it.

# RELIGION CONSTITUTES THE HAPPINESS OF LIFE.

What would this world be without religion? Were the name of God, and his Son, Jesus Christ, unknown to us, it would be the abode of despair. This world, cheered by the light of faith, and animated by the word of the Saviour, and by the indescribable love of God, is heaven, compared with what it might have been; it is one mighty and sublime harmony, in which every thing that lives, and every thing that comes to pass, is appointed for some wise purpose.

Let us lift our eyes to the mighty Author of

existence! then life will not seem a vain dream; its noble and important object will be confessed. All things are, by the hand of the Eternal, most intimately connected—all throughout his vast domain, is regulated with the wisest order, with the most perfect arrangement.

God is immutable: that he is so, cannot be seen in the brief fleeting vision of life; that he is immutable can only be seen in eternity. Our desires ought not to be excited with the evanescent treasures of the world, the affectionate intercourse with our fellows, nor the pride of earthly fame; it is purity of heart that ought to be our object. Have we taken that high ground which immortal spirits might be expected to take? Have we even taken that course which we ought to have preferred, to seek the mysterious invisible Being to whom we owe our all? Not all the world can offer, can afford that which ought to satisfy our hearts; we shall find it in religion alone.

Look up to the Saviour. Why deplore the losses which affection has sustained? why mourn over the grave of the beloved, forgetful that those who have passed from this state of being before us, will rise again and never die? All grief is vain; it cannot reanimate the dead. Weep not, then, for that which was of no real value, and think only of God and eternity. Our Saviour declares to us "I live, and ye shall live also," and thus he graciously consoled the sorrowing Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Remembering these expressions, banish all cares, cease to sigh, and rejoice in the possession of faith.

Art thou weary of life? is thy bosom filled with despondency? Look up to God, and find that consolation which man denies. Though misfortunes press heavily on the sufferer, though thy hopes are blighted, thy heart lacerated, these are but gracious admonitions, to fix thy thoughts on objects of higher value—objects of immortal hope. Confide in thy Father who is in heaven, whose hand afflicts, that thou mayest become wiser, that thou mayest know the true value of the attractions of this transitory state of being, and not suffer thy wishes mainly to centre in them, using only the best and purest of them as the aids of virtue, to cheer the fainting pilgrim on his road to glory. Hence with apprehension, with vain alarm! Dismiss thy tears, if religion

retains its influence over thy mind, and let thy heart turn to thine eternal Father, who knows thy most secret sorrows, and who, in due season, will give thee comfort. He knows better than we can do, what will ennoble the mind, and what will tend to our permanent felicity.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth," was the exclamation of Job, when groaning under the pressure of extraordinary calamity. So should the Christian exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," seeing it is he alone who can soothe the aching heart; it is he alone who can safely conduct us through the world, and give us to par-

ticipate in bliss above the sky.

Then turn thy eyes to God, and to that heaven in which his throne of light, and love, and justice is established, whence flows that divine peace which "passeth all understanding." The sufferer who cannot be tranquil amidst the most serious changes of fortune, who cannot encounter the varieties of light and darkness with unshaken courage, is deficient in faith, and wants confidence in the blessed providence of God. Not yet in him is the animating spirit of the holy Jesus manifest; he knows not his sublime destination, and is but a groveller on the earth. The Christian must know that he is to feel the painful thorns of life, in order that he may learn from them the perishable character of all below, to the end that his views may be elevated to the source of every good, and that he may acknowledge Christ, his friend, his comforter, his Redeemer, and feel that by him he has been secured a happy eternity.

Our Redeemer lives! With him we desire to live, as we trust do all those whom God gave to our love, and who have since been taken away. Our Saviour reigns eternally, and we shall share his blessedness. His kingdom, and our treasure

are in heaven.

## GOD'S VAST GOODNESS LIKE HIMSELF.

If a prince, a duke, an earl, should send, by the hand of his servant, for some poor, sorry, beggarly female, to take her for his master to wife, and man-servant should come and say, My lord and master, such an one, hath sent me to thee, to take thee to him to wife; he is rich, beautiful, and of excellent qualities; he is loving, meek, humble, well-spoken, etc.—what now would this poor, sorry, beggarly creature think? what would she say? or, how would she frame an answer? When king David sent to Abigail upon this account, and though she was a rich woman, yet she said, "Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord," 1 Sam. xxv. 40, 41. She was confounded, she could not well tell what to say, the offer was so great, beyond what could in reason be expected.

But suppose this great person should second his suit, and

send to this sorry creature again, what would she say now? Would she not say You mock me? But what if he affirms it, that he is in good earnest, and that his lord must have her to wife; yea, suppose he should prevail upon her to credit his message, and to dress herself for her journey; yet behold, every thought of her pedigree confounds her; also her sense of want of beauty makes her ashamed; and if she doth but think of being embraced, the unbelief that is mixed with that thought, whirls her into tremblings: and now she calls herself a fool, for believing the messenger, and thinks not to go; if she thinks of being bold, she blushes; and the least thought that she shall be rejected when she comes at him, makes her look as if she would give up the ghost.

And is it a wonder then to see a soul that is drowned in the sense of glory, and a sense of its own nothingness, to be confounded in itself, and to fear that the glory apprehended is too great, too good, and too rich for such an one

That thing, heaven and eternal glory is so great, and I that would have it, so small, so sorry a creature, that the thoughts

of obtaining it confound me.

Thus, I say, doth the greatness of the things desired, quite dash and overthrow the mind of the desire: O, it is too big!

it is too big! it is too great a mercy!

But, coming sinner, let me reason with thee; thou sayest, it is too big, too great. Well, will things that are less satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing than heaven, than glory and eternal life, answer thy desires? No, nothing less; and yet I fear they are too big, and too good for me, even to obtain. Well, as big and as good as they are, God giveth them to such as thou; they are not too big for God to give; no, not too big to give freely: be content; let God give like himself; he is the eternal God, and giveth like himself.

Bunyan.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 18.

GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

Jesus, about to be betrayed, Behold in yonder garden's shade; See in that look, that tearful eye, The weakness of mortality Though fainting, he would struggle yet, With "agony, and bloody sweat; While all resigned his thoughts thus run-"Not mine, Oh God! thy will be done."

Bright offspring of a holy mind! Lesson sublime for all mankind! Not persecution's naked blade, Nor threatening foes, nor friends afraid, Nor torture from the scourging rod, Could tear the Saviour from his God. His course ends as it had begun, " Not mine, Oh God! thy will be done.

Let every sojourner on earth, Who looks for a celestial birth, Endeavour to instruct his heart. From this he never must depart. But when no comforter is near, And horrid peril thrills with fear, Still cry, 'till life's last sand be run, "Not mine, Oh God! thy will be done." JESUS IN THE GARDEN. MATTHEW, XVI.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall

be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee. yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples. 36 ¶ Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebe-

dee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour.

41 Watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their

eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

## THE SUFFERINGS AND RESIGNATION OF OUR REDEEMER.

If we address our mind to that terrible night which the eternal Son of God was doomed to pass in sleepless sorrow, in the garden of Gethsemane; we must feel how inexpressibly great was the affliction endured by him for the sins of man, That night, so full of anguish for him, was the source of countless blessings to the human race. Let us reflect on the repose which has been granted to us during the last night, and contrast that with the misery, anxiety, and mortification which our Redeemeer experienced in the last memorable night of his mortal life. Sinners that we are. but for his merits and sufferings, what would our wretched fate have been? What would our situation now have proved, had we been forced to

drink that cup of sorrow which was prepared for our Lord? If that awful displeasure of the Most High, by man provoked, which fell upon him, had so descended upon us—had we been required to sustain so fearful a contest with the powers of darkness, through which Christ passed with glory!—the thought is appalling!—we must have fallen for ever in the unequal struggle. Our Redeemer, for one moment, shrunk from the dreadful fate which awaited him, but the next moment his holy resolution revived, and he prayed that not his will, but that of his eternal Father, might be done. He suffered to leave us a sublime example of humility, confidence, and

perfect resignation to the will of God.

Oh, then gracious Redeemer! we will ever devoutly worship thee, ever be ready, to the best of our ability, to render all homage to thy holy Life's burthens shall not depress, its pleasures shall not seduce. We will not contemplate the dreadful agonies which it was thine to know, without loathing that sin which was the cause of our Saviour's misery. It is we who ought to have suffered from that wrath which struck the devoted Jesus. We ought to experience that grief, that anguish, which he found almost insupportable. Our transgressions have been laid upon him, and it is our pride, our joy, that these have been atoned for by the pangs he endured. How cheering is the promise, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Relying upon this, we will never pusillanimously despair, but, by patience under those visitations which we may experience, it shall be our endeavour to prove that we remember our Lord with appropriate gratitude and love.

Thus ever it shall be our aim to think and to feel, to remember what misery it cost our blessed Saviour to lift us from that depth of sorrow into which, through the sins of man, we had fallen. May he be graciously pleased himself to impress this on all our hearts. May he present his image to us, as he appeared on the Mount of Olives, trembling and disturbed, so often as, with unworthy joy, we would revel in sinful pleasure! May the torments which he has endured, rouse us whenever our consciences are disposed to sleep in false security. We will remember the scourge which afflicted thy flesh, when we seek to repose in a state of rebellion against heaven. Let us remember the ransom which has been paid for us, and labour to prove ourselves in some degree worthy of it. In the sufferings of Jesus we find relief—in his death-struggle, our liberation from death. We should feel that in the last moment of our worldly existence, when we, like him we desire to follow, must strive with sin, and sin's swful offspring, death, we shall to the end be wonderfully sustained, and through thy triumph be ourselves victorious over the grave—for ever.

## WEALTH OPPOSED TO MAN'S TRUE WELFARE.

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate. Ask you for what? To give his war on man The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil: Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe. And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime Of life? to hang his airy nest on high, On the slight timber of the topmost bough, Rocked at each breeze, and menacing a fall? Granting grim Death at equal distance there, Yet peace begins just where ambition ends. What makes man wretched? happiness denied? Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdained: She comes too meanly dressed to win our smile, And calls herself Content, a homely name! Our flame is transport, and content our scorn. Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her, And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead; A tempest to warm transport near of kin. Unknowing what our mortal state admits, Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise, And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace; Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth! Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate! As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up Thy wholesome fears, now, drawn in contrast, see Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand, See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs, Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware, And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng. All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends, Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings, Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair, Citill more adored) to snatch the golden shower.

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more, As stars from absent suns have leave to shine. O what a precious pack of votaries, Unkennelled from the prisons and the stews, Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise! All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand, And, wide expanding their voracious jaws, Morsel on morsel swallow down unchewed, Untasted, through mad appetite for more; Gorged to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still: Sagacious all to trace the smallest game, And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!) Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly, O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground. Drunk with the burning scent of place or power, Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die.

Young.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY

THE ALL-SEEING EYE.

Among the deepest shades of night, Can there be one who sees my way? Yes :- God is like a shining light, That turns the darkness into day.

Where every eye around me sleeps, May I not sin without control No: for a constant watch he keeps. On every thought of every soul.

If I could find some cave unknown, Where human feet had never trod. Yet there I could not be alone; On every side there would be God.

He smiles in heaven; he frowns in hell; He fills the air, the earth, the sea :-I must within his presence dwell; I cannot from his anger flee.

Yet I may flee-he shows me where: Tells me to Jesus Christ to fly: And where he sees me weeping there, There's only mercy in his eye.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

THE HEART MUST BE CLEANSED. MATT. XXIII.

13 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing : but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing: but whosover sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by

it, and by all things thereon. 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it,

and by him that dwelleth therein. 22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the

throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. 23 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for

ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a

25 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but. within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within

the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean

27 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

## OUR HOPE IN DEATH.

While in perfect health, conscious shame often surprises the sinner. He sees his actions cannot be justified before God or man; but the soul, in contemplating that which is just, too often stultified by sensuality, loses all its energy, and can make no effort to reform. Sad is the condition of that human being, when the moment approaches in which he must resign all he possessed on earth, having nothing to hope for from eternity.

The wiser happier man who remembers that he is immortal, and fulfils his duty, is placed in a very different situation. The Christian who can look above the concerns of this earth, to enjoy visions of eternal happiness, has the joy to understand what it is to live in Jesus.

To him death is gain. To him the words of Christ, "neither the world, his house, his village, or his city, is his real home," have a living appli-cation. From time to time, he continues to feel that he was not born for this dreary orb, but that he was created to dwell in the infinite kingdom of the eternal. Heaven is his destiny, every soul in it is connected with him, and God is their common parent.

Death to him is gain. It but takes from him the terrestrial veil which he assumed for a season, it but exchanges the garment of the soul which he has worn here, for far nobler attire. The soul remains in life; God, the universe, and all creation are with it; and the friends it has lost, who have been residing in their father's house, are restored to him in another state of being.

To the Christian who lives in Jesus, death is a real gain. We may leave many joys behind, but we also escape much suffering. Our tears will no longer flow, for bliss is the portion of the emancipated soul. And what is there so perfect in this world that we should wish to remain for ever here? Why is there amongst thousands and thousands of men, scarcely one who would wish to pass through this life again? To be alarmed then at the prospect of dissolution, is childish folly. They who know how to live in Christ, know how to die with joy, and the righteous man dies daily. He dies to the world, while he lifts his thoughts to God, forgetful of all meaner themes. He regards the world as trivial, as insignificant, and aspres to communicate with God and his angels in heaven.

Death is our gain: in this world the fate of all the sons of men, and all the operations of nature. teach that we are born for eternity. Let then a more perfect existence be the object of our desire. Let us labour to ennoble ourselves. Let us acquire for our souls the wealth of virtue, that through the Saviour we may be fitted for our future home, to which death shall eventually conduct us. Then, death will only further our desires, and advance us towards that state for which we were originally designed. Death is but the exchange of an inferior for a superior condition; it will lift us to a state more exalted than any thing we can imagine. The earth-worm might as well aspire to conceive the bliss which the bosom of a rational man can know.

Oh, gracious Saviour! divine expounder of thy Father's will, be thou our hope, our life, for, but for thee, death would be perdition. Thy thoughts we will strive to make ours; thy doctrine shall be our guide; earthly troubles we will regard with indifference; love like thine we will endeavour to extend to all our fellow-creatures; with thy holy eagerness we will aspire to spread happiness around, and, if possible, with thy persevering resolution, we will surmount every obstacle in the way of our souls' advancement. Our evil inclinations shall be subdued, that we may act a nobler part; the pains of life we will endure with fortitude, we will taste its joys with prudent reserve. abiding in thy faith, with resignation to the divine will, and confident in the goodness and wisdom of Providence, look confidently forward to eternal life, and to God as our Father, exclaiming, "For Christ is our life, death is our gain."

#### MAN'S IMPERFECT STATE.

'Twas in the dead of night, all nature lay shrouded in darkness; every creature was buried in sleep; the most profound silence reigned through the universe. In these solemn moments, Eliphaz alone, all wakeful and solitary, was musing upon sublime and heavenly subjects: when, lo! an awful being, from the invisible realms, burst into his apartment. A spirit passed before his face; astonishment seized the benolder: his bones shivered within him; his flesh trembled all over him; and the hair of his head stood erect with horror. Sudden and unexpected was the appearance of the phantom; not such its departure. It stood still, to present itself more fully to his view; it made a solemn pause, to prepare his mind for some momentous message. After which, a voice was

heard; a voice, for the importance of its meaning, worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance; for the solemnity of its delivery, enough to alarm a heart of stone. It spoke, and this was the purport of its words: "Shall man, frail man, be just before the mighty God? Shall even the most accomplished of mortals be pure in the sight of his Maker? behold, and consider it attentively. He put no such trust in his most exalted servants, as should bespeak them incapable of defect. And his very angels He charged with folly, as sinking, even in the highest perfection of their holiness, infinitely beneath his transcendant glories; as falling, even in all the fidelity of their obedience, inexpressibly short of the homage due to his adorable majesty. If angelic natures must not presume to justify even themselves, or their services, before uncreated purity; how much more absurd is such a notion, how much more impious such an attempt, in them that dwell in houses of clay; whose original is from the dust, and whose state is all imperfection!"

I would observe from hence, the very singular necessity of that poverty of spirit, which entirely renounces its own attainments; and most thankfully submits to the righteounces of the incarnate God. To inculate this lesson, the Son of the blessed came down from heaven, and pressed no other principle with so repeated an importunity on his hearers. To instil the same doctrine, the Holy Ghost touched the lips of the apostles with sacred eloquence; and made it an eminent part of their commission, "to demolish every high imagination." That no expedient might be wanting, to give it a deep and lasting efficacy on the human mind, a phantom arises from the valley of the shadow of death, or a teacher descends from the habitation of spirits. Whatever then we neglect, let us not neglect to cultivate this grace, which has been so variously taught, so powerfully enforced.

Hervey.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 19.

#### THE PROMISE PLEADED.

By me, O my Saviour, stand,
In every trying hour;
Guard me with thy outstretched hand,
And hold me by thy power;
Mindful of thy faithful word,
Thine all-sufficient grace bestow:
Keep me, keep me, dearest Lord,
And never let me go.

Give me, Lord, an holy fear.
And fix it in my heart,
That I may from evil near
With speedy care depart:
Still thy timely help afford,
And all thy loving-kindness shew;
Keep me, keep me, dearest Lord,
And never let me go.

Let me never leave thy breast,
From thee, my Saviour, stray:
Thou art my support and rest,
My true and living way;
My exceeding great reward,
In heaven above, and earth below;
Keep me, keep me, dearest Lord,
And never let me go.

Never let me go, till I, Upborne on wings of love, Gain the regions of the sky, And take my seat above: Thou hast passed thy gracious word, That thou wilt bring me safely through; Thou wilt, therefore, keep me, Lord, Nor ever let me go.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

## PRAYER AND PERSEVERANCE WILL AT LAST PREVAIL. NEHEMIAH, CHAP. II.

4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make

request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a

time.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 ¶ Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent cap-

tains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 ¶ And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me: neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates

thereof were consumed with fire.

14 Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.

15 Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the

valley, and so returned.

- 16 And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did: neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.
- 17 Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the walls of Jeru-

salem, that we be no more a reproach.

18 Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.

19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?

20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build.

## THE SAVIOUR'S EXAMPLE.

Looking at the high-minded philanthropy and sublime benevolence of our Saviour, ought we, professing to follow him, to be implacable towards those that have offended us, or generally wanting in kindness to our fellow creatures? Our Lord addressed a prayer to his eternal Father, for his relentless enemies, even while they were tasking their ingenuity to subject him to the most intolerable pain. While they sacrilegiously breathed curses upon him, he gave them his blessing; the object of their brutal rage, he felt for their wickedness compassion, and while with fiendlike ardour they laboured to aggravate his sufferings, he graciously solicited for them mercy, and, consequently, eternal joy. Let us duly acknowledge the immensity of this love; let us admire and wonder, and not only admire and wonder, but anxiously strive to imitate it.

Nor ought the task to be difficult. When we reflect on the infinite majesty of Christ, and then contemplate our own meanness; when we recal the important fact that he was the Son of the eternal God, free from guilt and most holy, the wrongs which were heaped upon him, illustrious and pure as he was, were the most terrible that could be known to mortal man, yet his persecutors received his pity and forgiveness. Professing to tread in his footsteps, what shadow of an apology can we urge for harshness to our fellows, should we, who are but dust and ashes, thus weakly forget our duty? We are provoked by wrongs inflicted to seek revenge; he, we have seen, most unlike us, looked with kindness on the pitiless foes who were

hurrying him to death.

Blessed Redeemer! may thy example produce effects on our souls which shall never be eradicated! Our first thought which would prompt severity towards the hostile, the ungrateful, the treacherous, ought to be, that Jesus, interceding for his murderers, imploringly exclaimed. "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." May that matchless sympathy, so manifested for human weakness, excite us to regard with tenderness those by whom we are hated, and to ask mercy for those who fiercely breathe curses and reproaches upon us. Let it vanquish the angry feelings of our hearts, and check every tendency to sinful wrath. Unless aided by our Saviour, our good resolutions will fade away, and our evil propensities be indulged, when we find our enemy in our power; but if he deign to animate our souls, we shall be able to act a nobler part, and triumph over those passions which would degrade.

This morning will conduct us into the society of our fellow men. May the benign and heavenly reflections which have been suggested to our minds, in these moments of solemn meditation, be our companions, wherever we move, and still may we bear in mind what our Saviour endured, and aim at copying his forbearance. May the love of Christ continue to regard us with bounty, and may the atonement which he offered for offending man, blot out our transgressions from the record of God. Deeply do we feel the importance of his mediation. Oh Lord! intercede for us with the Eternal, even though we should unhappily deviate from the right path! Let thy powerful solicitation be renewed and continued for us, that the sins of this day may be remitted. Let thy abounding mercy, Oh Jesus! be interposed for trembling sinners, that we may not sink into the abode of darkness; but grant that we may be rescued from the bonds of sin, and made glorious, as heirs of heaven.

## GOD WILL BE MERCIFUL TO HIS ENEMIES.

When the army of Antichrist is miraculously overthrown, the Lord, who forgetteth not mercy even in the midst of judgment, will not make an entire end: but will spare some of the least guilty of his enemies, reserving them for the noblest purposes. Zechariah teaches us, that even so much as a third part shall be spared. These may be supposed to be less hardened in wickedness than their associates; and to have taken a part in the expedition, either through the inveterate prejudices of a Popish education (the expedition having been blessed and sanctified by the false prophet) or through the tyrannical compulsion which we have already beheld Antichristian France begin to exercise over her degraded allies. Nor will they only be spared: plucked as brands out, of the burning, they will likewise be converted by the mercy of God to a zealous profession of genuine Christianity.

Thus wonderfully preserved and converted, they will become proper instruments to accomplish the yet unfulfilled purposes of the Most High. Scattered over the face of the whole carth, they will carry every where the tidings of their own defeat, of the marvellous power of the Lord, and of the restoration of Judah. Meanwhile there is some reason to suppose, that the awful apparition of the Shechinah will still remain suspended over Jerusalem, visible at once from its stupendous height to a whole hemisphere, and bearing ample attestation to the veracity of the fugitives. Nor will they carry their message in vain. Judah is indeed restored: but the lost ten tribes of Israel are still dispersed through the extensive regions of the north and of the east. These, according to the

sure word of prophecy, however they may be now concealed from mortal knowledge, will be found again, and will be brought back into the country of their fathers. All nations and all tongues shall come and see the glory of the Lord; for he will set among them a sign, even the sign of the Son of man, the sign of the illuminated Shechinah; and will send unto them those that have escaped from the slaughof the Antichristian confederacy, that they may declare his glory among the nations. Convinced by ocular demonstration that God doth indeed reign in Zion, and at once divinely impelled and enabled both to seek out from among them, and to find the long-lost sheep of the house of Israel, they will bring by land, in vast caravans, all the brethren of Judah, for an offering to the Lord, as the great maritime power had already brought the converted Jews for a present unto the Lord to his holy mountain.

Faber.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 19.

THE HEART SURRENDERED TO GOD.

Take my poor heart just as it is, Set up therein thy throne; So shall I love thee above all, And live to thee alone.

Complete thy work and crown thy grace, That I may faithful prove! And listen to that small still voice, Which only whispers love;

Which teaches me what is thy will,
And tells me what to do;
Which covers me with shame, when I
Do not thy will pursue.

This unction may I ever feel,
This teaching from my Lord,
And learn obedience to thy voice,
Thy soft reviving word.

Countess of Huntington's Collection.

GOD WILL FINALLY DISTINGUISH THE RIGHTEOUS FROM
THE WICKED. MALACHI, III.

8 Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.
9 Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even

this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD

of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

13 ¶ Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee.

14 Ye have said, it is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept the ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts.

15 And now we call the proud happy: yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

16 ¶ Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a

man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.

## SORROW SENT BY GOD THE SOURCE OF GOOD.

We contemplate with sadness the afflictions which threaten us, the calamities which we are likely to mourn, and lose our firmness at the thought. We doubt if we shall be able to sustain them with fortitude, and look around us in vain for comfort. As Christians let us summon up more resolution, and boldly look the evil in the face. What are we that we should be exempt from sorrow? let us claim assistance from the Most High to carry us through the fiery ordeal, let us seek for renewed strength in the consolations of religion, and keeping in our minds the language of scripture "call to remembrance the former days in which ye endured a great fight of affliction."

It is difficult to derive strength of mind from past sorrows. Memory recals scenes and circumstances, which tend to dishearten those who are too weak to confide in their Maker. On his goodness alone must we depend; our own merits, our own wisdom can avail us nothing. The true believer in the promises of the Almighty, will however, be soothed by the conviction that all must, in the end, work for his good, and that even suffering will be consecrated by the feelings it must awaken. Those who have worldly happiness are often indifferent to their eternal welfare; the man in health forgets that he is to die; the pangs of disease, and the near view of the tomb to which he must descend, are necessary to bow down the proud spirit, and make it feel how weak, how helpless it is, the support of the Creator being but for a moment withdrawn. All power is from God: men are but instruments in his hands, and seldom are they on the alert to fulfil their duty, till sorrow has compelled them to lift their thoughts to heaven. We feel within ourselves that we have been too largely absorbed by worldly anxieties. We have coveted wealth and honours, as if, these once obtained, they would always remain to us. Sickness and grief were necessary to open our eyes to their insignificance: and to these we owe an inestimable benefit. We have still been wanting

in that fortitude which becomes human beings who know themselves the objects of God's love, under every variety of fortune. Alas! we must reproach ourselves that we have been wanting in faith. We will solicit strength to bear up against the pressure of calamity in days to come, and look upon the pains we may know as messengers from on high, who come to remind us of our destiny. Under their pressure we will no longer repine, for they come from thee, O Father! and however dreadful their form, their object must be good, and they will serve to render still more delightful the joyous eternity, which a suffering Redeemer has prepared for repentant sinners.

To God we wish, therefore, to devote our whole minds. We acknowledge his goodness in moments of happiness: nor will we doubt his benevolence when the clouds of adversity darken our horizon; in all circumstances, as devout Christians, we will

put our trust in God.

## SEEK INCREASE OF CONFIDENCE IN FAITH.

Reader, if thou art an awakened man, convinced of sin by the word and spirit of God, all thine enemies will try to keep thee from the clear knowledge of thy union with Christ. The reason is plain; because then thou wilt not be able to depend on Christ's promised strength, and to make use of it by faith, which is almighty to defeat them all. Hearken not, therefore, to any suggestion, nor be afraid of any opposition, which would hinder thee from seeking to be fully convinced of thine interest in Christ, and of thy being a branch in the true vine. Satan will use all his wiles and fiery darts, and all carnal professors will be on his side, and they will have close allies in thine own breast, in thine unbelief, in thy legal spirit, and in thy lusts and corruptions. Consider, why do these enemies fight so hard against thy being safely settled and comfortably grounded upon Christ by living faith? Is it not, because thou wilt then be an overmatch for them, through the strength of Jesus ?-And does not this plainly shew thee the absolute necessity of knowing, that Christ and thou art one? Till this be known, thou wilt be afraid to apply to him and to make use of his strength, and till thou dost use it, all thine enemies will triumph over thee. O beg of God then to increase thy faith, that thou mayest be fully convinced of thy union with Christ, and mayest live in him safe, and on him happy. Hear and read his word, and pray for the effectual working of the Lord the Spirit in it, and by it, that faith may come and grow by hearing, until it be finally settled, without doubt or wavering, that Christ is thine, and thou art his.

After the believer is thus grounded and established in the knowledge of his union with Christ, it behoves him then to inquire, what God has given him a right to in consequence of this union; and the scripture will inform him, that in the covenant of Grace it has pleased the Father, that all fulness should dwell in his Son, as the head for the use of his members. He has it to supply all their need. They cannot possibly want any thing, but it is treasured up for them in his infinite fulness; there they may have it, grace for grace, every moment, as their occasions require, and they have it in no other way, and by no other hand, than faith, trusting the word of promise, and relying upon Christ's faithfulness and power to fulfil it; as it is written, "The just shall live by his faith,"

Hab. ii. 4. having received justification to life by faith in the righteousness of Christ, he depends on Christ to keep him alive, and makes use of Christ's fulness for all the wants of that spiritual life which he has given. He trusts him for them all, and lives upon him by faith for the continual receiving of them all, and according to his faith so is it done unto him.

Romaine.

# MORNING .-- FEBRUARY 20.

#### THE PRAISES OF THE ETERNAL.

O praise the Lord in that blest place, From whence his goodness largely flows; Praise him in heaven, where he his face Unveil'd in perfect glory shows.

Praise him for all the mighty acts
Which he in our behalf hath done;
His kindness this return exacts,
With which our praise should equal run.

Let the shrill trumpet's warlike voice Make rocks and hills his praise rebound; Praise him with harp's melodious noise, And gentle psalt'ry's silver sound.

Let virgin troops soft trimbrels bring, And some with graceful motions dance; Let instruments of various string, With organs join'd, his praise advance.

Let them who joyful hymns compose, To cymbals set their songs of praise: Cymbals of common use, and those That loudly sound on solemn days.

Let all that vital breath enjoy,

The breath he does to them afford,
In just returns of praise employ;

Let ev'ry creature praise the Lord.

#### MOCKERY AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS. MATT. XXVII.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.
29 ¶ And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they
put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they
bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail,
King of the Jews!

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garment, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down they watched him there:

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

39 ¶ And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their

heads.

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said.

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to dripk.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 ¶ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

## THE SUFFERINGS OF THE REDEEMER.

We ought never for a moment to lose sight of the immense advantages secured to us by the sufferings of our Lord. His abounding compassion has covered our deficiences, obliterated our transgressions, and turned aside the curse which must have fallen on our sins, had we been unredeemed The blessings to which we by divine goodness. may look forward, are commensurate with the pangs Jesus Christ endured. All the circumstances of our lives are pregnant with important lessons, which, properly studied, are most soothing to the mind. By the contemplation of thy sufferings, O Christ! we desire to be animated and emboldened to look forward to a future state, with devout resignation and sacred hope. Mentally we see thy mortal frame bleeding on the cross; we see thee exhausted from cruel wounds, tortured by raging thirst, the cooling draught which might, for a moment, assuage thine anguish, withheld. How mournful is the spectacle presented on Mount Calvary. But even in that we may discover subjects for continual rejoicing. The call of the agonized Saviour for bodily sustenance, represents the eagerness of the immortal soul to know peace and behold the redemption of mankind, which has been promised to the penitent. In Christ we gaze on a fountain of living

water, whence it may be ours to gain nourishing draughts of spiritual comfort, and everlasting peace. Shall we not then press forward to avail ourselves of the opportunity? Yes, it shall be so. We will hasten to anticipate the object of our Lord. If we covet not thee so earnestly as thou hast sought us, still do our hearts aspire to be numbered among thy flock, to be found among

thy constant worshippers.

The misery which Jesus was doomed to know in this life, may be likened to a hell upon earth: yet this was unrepiningly borne that we might not be for ever lost. Through him, not only are we spared the dread of final condemnation, but we are cheered by the prospect of heaven. Since we are pardoned by Christ, what can we fear? He has made our peace above. The grace of God will be extended to us on account of what he endured while an exile from his home in the sky, that he might win for us the undying bounty of his eternal Father. Through him death is no longer an object of terror; death is but the portal which conducts us to immortality.

The conviction of this, we hope, will constantly cheer our souls; and grant, O Lord, that our hearts may joyously persevere in offering just homage to thee. Since it was thy sublime object to obtain salvation for man, O! may we so far strive to imitate our Redeemer, as gladly and zealously to labour for the welfare of our fellow-mortals. May his sufferings and submission wean us from earthly objects, and grant us strength of mind to be ready to sacrifice our all on earth to thy glory, and the benefit of our fellow-christians. We would fain seek their advantage, as we would our own. Enlighten our minds that we may feel how great the sin we commit when we forget thy ordinances. We pray that our hearts may not supinely rest in sin. Let them be roused from dull insensibility, by remembering what Christ suffered for us upon the cross. We would crave that they should be sensible of deep remorse; yet we implore thee, O God, let the wound be healed from the promises of scripture and the merits of our Lord. Let every trace of stubborn unbelief be eradicated from our hearts! grant us faith in thy word, and let us stedfastly adhere to the truth, and abjuring sin, consecrate all our thoughts to our Saviour and our God: that we may, after this life, be admitted to the happiness of those who will sound thy praises through all eternity.

#### CHRIST A FOUNDATION.

If we are for setting buttresses to the house that is built upon a rock; what is this, but a disparagement to the foundation? If the foundation be already firm and good, why are you for endeavouring to strengthen it? So far as you set up any props unto Christ the foundation, who is to bear up all by himself; so far you disparage Christ, so far you bring him down, and give him not the pre-eminence.

\*\*Dr. Crisp.\*\*

\*\*Dr. Crisp.\*\*

Christ is a sure foundation. So sure, that lay what load you can upon him, he stoops not: and therefore he was excellently typified by the pillars of brass, in Solomon's Temple. They were made of brass, to shew their strength, whereon the whole weight of the porch of the temple lay.

Ibid.

You that are believers, and are under some particular trial; if you run to any inherent grace, or temper of spirit that is in yourselves, or any qualification, or any performances that you can tender, and look after all or any of these, as that which will bring you the comfort, the support, or the supplies you want: while you look faintly and coldly upon Christ, and on the freeness and sureness of the grace which Christ brings along with himself; so long you deny unto Christ that pre-eminence, which God has given him above all beside. *Ibid.* 

If thou ever sawest Christ, thou sawest him a rock, higher than self-righteousness, Satan, and sin. And this rock doth follow thee: and there will be a continual dropping of honey and grace, out of this rock, to satisfy thee. Wilcox.

Hast thou but a mind to Christ? Come and take the water of life freely. It is thine. It is given to thee. There is nothing looked for from thee, to take thy portion in Christ. Thine he is, as much as any person's under heaven. Dr. Crisp.

Dost thou thirst? that is, hast thou a mind really to Christ, that Christ should say really to thy soul, I am thy salvation? It may be, thou art suspicious of thyself, and thy heart is apt to say, "Christ is not my portion; I am not fit for Christ; I am a great sinner; I must be holy first." Alas! this is bringing a price to Christ. But you must come, without money and without price. And what is it, to come without money or price? It is to take Christ, and the waters of life, merely and simply as a gift.

These are the sure mercies of David, when a man receives the things of Christ, only because Christ gives them; and not in regard to any action of ours, as the ground of taking them.

Let men be ever so great enemies to Christ, yet as soon as he sets up himself in their hearts, they will love him, own him, serve him, and suffer for him.

Dyer.

Seeing Christ hath fastened heaven to the far end of the cross, and he will not loosen the knot himself, and none else can (for when Christ ties a knot, all the world cannot undo it); let us, then, count it exceeding joy, when we fall into divers temptations.

Rutherfoord.

# EVENING.-FEBRUARY 20.

THANKS TO THE FOUNTAIN OF LOVE.

O render thanks to God above, The fountain of eternal love! Whose mercy firm through ages past Has stood, and shall for ever last.

Who can his mighty deeds express, Not only vast, but numberless? What mortal eloquence can raise His tribute of immortal praise? Happy are they, and only they, Who from thy judgments never stray, Who know what's right; not only so, But always practise what they know.

Extend to me that favour Lord Thou to thy chosen dost afford; When thou return'st to set them free, Let thy salvation visit me.

Bach.

# MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE. —GOD'S WRATH AND MERCY. PSALM LXXVIII.

12 Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.

13 He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

14 In the day time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

15 He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.

16 He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the Most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness.

20 Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel:

22 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

23 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

24 And he rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

25 Man did eat angels' food; he sent them meat to the full.

26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

27 He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:

28 And he let it fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So they did eat and were well filled: for he gave them their own desire;

30 They were not estranged from their lust. But while their meat was yet in their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen *men* of Israel.

32 For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.

34 When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God.

35 And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

38 But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

#### THE GOODNESS OF GOD SEEN IN ALL THINGS.

A day must arrive, when those least given to solemn meditation, must turn their thoughts towards a future state. As we advance through life, death stands full before us, and tremblingly we feel that we stand on the verge of a precipice from which we must fall into the grave, and from which, though sensible of the danger, we cannot retreat. In these moments, the questions of what we are, what we ought to be, and what hereafter we shall become, are pressed upon the mind with a degree of force not to be resisted. We feel that our existence cannot end here; we feel that there is that within us which belongs not to this world, that seeks a happier state of being. Let us exult in the thought! That we are capable of entertaining it, is a proof annihilation is not for us, and that God designs us for immortality.

The goodness of God is in all things conspicuous. He gave the world existence; and all we see, and all we admire, proceed from him. He is the Author of that admirable system which we but imperfectly comprehend, but which the dullest mind must join to admire. The planets in their spheres, the ocean in its greatness, the rivers in their courses, the flowers in the field, all are governed by his immutable laws. Objects the most stupendous and the most minute, are grasped with equal care and precision by the Eternal mind.

Fixing our eyes on immortality, we ought to know that sin, if not repressed, will work our eternal ruin. God delights not in the death of a sinner, but that he should turn from his evil ways, and live. His only Son, our blessed Lord, devoted himself to ransom us. His example, his precepts, furnish standing rules for the benefit of all mankind, and he offers pardon to all who truly repent. But it is our duty to seek after righteousness, to attempt to imitate the perfection of the Saviour, and to conquer sin, that death may cease to be regarded with terror. The grace of God is extended to all who seek it. That will cheer the dreariest moments of our worldly existence, and sustain us in the parting hour. It was to make this known, that the Saviour came into the world, to proclaim that God offers the gift of his grace, not only to the good, but also to the greatest transgressor. Because sin has caused man to wander. God does not will that he should be eternally lost. While the lamp continues to burn, the trembling sinner may be restored to God.

Since thy mercy, O Father! is thus comprehensive, may it be ours to participate in it with all those who desire to honour thy name. May we become in some degree worthy of such goodness! But all that we receive must be the gift of our Creator's love. With all humility we desire to bow before thy throne. In the plenitude of thy goodness, put us not away from thee for ever. While listening to the words of the Saviour, "Come, all ye that are weary, and heavily laden, and I will give ye rest;" we feel truly sensible of our trespasses and sins, and rationally eager to obtain thy forgiveness. We now present ourselves before thee, devoutly craving thy aid to improve ourselves in faith, devotion, and charity, from day to day. Enable us to make good this work! so shall we be prepared eventually to quit life's troubled scene, contentedly renounce the vanities of earth, and give ourselves wholly up to the contemplation of heaven.

THE VALUE OF THE ATONEMENT OFFERED FOR MAN.

As the payment of a great sum, all at once, and at a day, is a better payment, than by a penny a year, until a thousand years be out; so Christ's satisfying the Father, at once, by one sacrifice of himself, is a better satisfaction, than if we should have been infinite days in paying that which his justice requires, and his indignation to sin doth expect. Dr. Crisp.

Let it be observed, that Christ's active obedience to the law for us, and in our room and stead, does not exempt us from personal obedience to it; any more than his sufferings and death exempt us from a corporeal death, or suffering for his sake. It is true, indeed, we do not suffer and die, in the sense he did; to satisfy justice and atone for sin: so neither do we yield obedience to the law, in order to obtain eternal life by it. By Christ's obedience for us, we are exempted from obedience to the law, in this sense; but not from obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation, by which we may glorify God, and express our thankfulness to him for his abundant mercies.

It is Christ's work, to take every present sin off the conscience of the believer, by the application of his blood and sacrifice. Hence he is said to be the Lamb of God that taketh away, that continues to take away, the sins of the world.

Before God enlightened me into the righteousness of Christ, and justification by it, I used to wonder how it was, that, seeing Christ lived thirty-three years and six months upon earth, only his death, or, at most, the last week of his life. should be of any avail for the salvation of sinners. But, blessed be God, I have long seen, that Christ was, all that time, working out a perfect obedience for my acceptance with the Father. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," is a text that amply accounts for his having spent above thirty-three years below, previous to his crucifixion: and is a truth, by which my soul is nourished and fed to life everlasting. Romaine.

If I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, O how happy should I be! If I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil. But I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner, who believes in Christ, has a righteousness infinitely more excellent, than that of either saints or angels. If the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in Christ my divine surety. If the law requires an obedience, that may stand before the burning eye of God, behold, it is in Jesus my mediator. Should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me. I remit them both to my dying and obedient Immanuel. With him, the Father is always well-pleased; and in him the believer stands complete,

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 21.

#### HOLY FORTITUDE.

Am I a soldier of the cross. A follower of the lamb? And shall I fear to own his cause .-Or blush to speak his name?

Must I be carried to the skies, On flowery beds of ease; While others fought to win the prize, And sailed through bloody seas!

Are there no foes for me to face? Must not I stem the flood? Is this vile world a friend to grace, To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign; Increase my courage, Lord! I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by thy word.

Thy saints, in all this glorious war, Shall conquer though they die: They see the triumph from afar, And seize it with their eve.

When that illustrious day shall rise, And all thy armies shine In robes of victory through the skies, The glory shall be thine.

Rippon's Collection

AWFUL VISITATIONS RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO FORGET GOD. ISAIAH V.

8 Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.

12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 ¶ Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thrist.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.

16 But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope.

19 That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it.

20 ¶ Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the

righteousness of the righteous from him!

24 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

# FRATITUDE TO BE PROVED BY COURAGE, ZEAL, AND RESIGNATION.

We must be the most ungrateful of men, if we can weakly again give ourselves up to sinful pleasure, remembering that to redeem man from the awful consequences of sin, the Saviour died on the cross. So to act would be to treat the grace of God with contempt, deny Christ, and dishonour his word, and thus bring upon ourselves an additional load of guilt to provoke divine wrath. Far be from our hearts such folly, such ingratitude, such depravity. We will never steel our bosoms against the kindly invitation of Christ; but, on the contrary, our souls shall expand with thankfulness and love. We will work out for ourselves, by ceaseless prayer and devout exercises, the plan laid down by our Lord, comforted and sustained by that faith which was his support, while on earth he felt the weaknesses of mortality; let us, remembering that through life, endeavour to follow the bright example set by Not to do this, were to affront the Saviour of man, and at the same time to renounce the rich prize which he has gained for us. In his dying hour he gave to the world the sublimest example of virtue. Our interest and our duty alike call upon us to shape our course by that which is at once the theme of our admiration, and the source of sweetest comfort, knowing that we are relieved from the weight of all our transgressions by the atonement which he has made.

The ingratitude of an idle scoffing world all events, our care through the vicissitudes of shall never withdraw us from the right path.

We hold ourselves superior to such abject folly. Humbly imitating Jesus, it shall be our study to suffer persecution with meekness, to endure mockery with silence, to meet injustice with patience, and to oppose to malevolent calumny, the unpresuming firmness of innocence. While our cry to God shall be, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;" like him, all resignation, we will humbly bow to the decrees of the eternal: and our chief care on earth shall be to benefit and improve our fellow-creatures. We, as Christ did for the sake of others, will cheerfully endure affliction and reproach, content to sacrifice our comfort, our health, nay, life itself for the good of our neighbours, so we can happily snatch their souls from peril, and place them on the road to heaven. If the divine source of all being should be pleased to impose painful trials, we will regard these but as a fitting preparation for a higher state of existence: and, feeling ourselves called upon to take up the cross and follow the Saviour, be ever prepared to do so to the best of our ability. Pursuing the thorny path in the day of heavy calamity, our prayers and supplication shall be breathed with our sighs, in the spirit which ever marked him who died for us, still looking up to God with reverent confidence, not doubting but. in his own good time, he will lead us into paths of peace. If it should be ours to meet with scorn and derision from rancorous foes, it must still be our resolve that such unmerited indignities shall not deter us from benefiting others. Should we have to lament that those we deemed our best friends, fly us in the hour of adversity, we will view their defalcations with pity, and still place our trust in the Almighty. If distracting doubts and dark despondency hang over us, we will strive against the fearful pressure, and summon up resolution to exclaim with our blessed Mediator on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" and treasure up in our thoughts the soothing assurance, that he who made us is competent to save: and that painful as the ordeal may be, we shall not sink to everlasting perdition. When that awful hour which none can escape, shall be announced as at hand, then let us be prepared to deliver up the spirit which Christ has ransomed into his own keeping, and by faith in him, rise victorious over death. How blest will be our situation if such consolation is ours in the last moments of our mortal suffering. Be it, at all events, our care through the vicissitudes of

Deign, gracious Lord, who endured such extremity of pain for sinful mortals, to grant us this fruit from thy sufferings. Strengthen our resolution, that we may, from day to day, become more like to thee: not less faithful to thy word in the dreary scenes of adversity, than in the sunny ray of prosperity to which we may be conducted. We trust to be supported by thee, that our feet may not falter, and that the fascinations of vice may no more have power to withdraw us from heaven. Deign, blessed Redeemer! to guide us into paths of peace, accept the homage of our hearts, and, finally, grant that we may be admitted to share thy glory.

THE POWERS OF MAN WITH REGARD TO FUTURITY SELDOM HSED

One of the most useful and admirable powers, which nature has bestowed upon man, and which follows reason, and distinguishes man from other animals, is prudence, a sagacity respecting future things. Beasts, which have not received this advantage from the hand of nature, only act and display their feeble senses about present things; they walk the way, that offers to their eyes, they eat the herb, which they see, and only move as they are enticed by the objects, at which they look: but, as they have no knowledge of futurity, they are at perfect rest. It is quite otherwise with man, his reason anticipates years, and ages: he sees things long before they arrive, he knows them by a concatenation of their causes and effects, and at the same time provides to forward or to frustrate them. By this prudential foresight, kingdoms and empires support themselves, by this cities and families are preserved: and by this all men endeavour, each as far as it is in his power, to procure a comfortable condition in this life. How then comes it to pass, that, while we employ our prudence so usefully about temporal things, we are all on a sudden deprived of it, when we should be concerned about the most important of all future things, salvation or damnation? is it not for this reason, that St. Paul, speaking of worldly men, calls them animals? "The animal man," says he, "receiveth not the things of the spirit of God." As if he had said, This man, who for the world testifies that he is truly man, who has so much industry, vivacity, and penetration for futurity, and so much solidity of judgment in the choice of ways and means, is yet a brute beast, a simple animal without reason and without intelligence, when the affair of his salvation is in question. Let us not be of this number, my brethren, let us not sleep like the foolish virgins, while we wait for the Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and this wisdom consists in always having the eyes open, and the mind concerned and active about what must follow this life, and the means, by which we may attain eternal felicity.

Claude.

# EVENING.—FEBRUARY 21.

GRATITUDE OFFERED .- HOPE CRAVED FROM GOD.

Great God, to thee my evening song With humble gratitude I raise: O let thy mercy tune my tongue, And fill my heart with lively praise.

My days unclouded, as they pass, And every gentle rolling hour. Are monuments of wondrous grace, And witness to thy love and power.

And yet this thoughtless wretched heart, Too oft regardless of thy love, Ungrateful, can from thee depart. And, fond of trifles, vainly rove.

Seal my forgiveness in the blood Of Jesus; his dear name alone I plead for pardon, gracious God, And kind acceptance at thy throne.

Let this blest hope mine eye-lids close, With sleep refresh my feeble frame; Safe in thy care may I repose, And wake with praises to thy name.

Rippon's Collection.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WISDOM AND HOLINESS. PROV. XVI.

3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established. 4 The LORD hath made all things for himself, yea, even the

wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from sin.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. 8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues

without right.

9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth 11 A just weight and balance are the LORD's: all the

weights of the bag are his work. 13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love

him that speaketh right.

16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver

17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul. 18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit

before a fall. 19 Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than

to divide the spoil with the proud. 20 He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good; and

whose trusteth in the Lord, happy is he. 21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning

22 Understanding is a well spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

26 He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.

27 An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.

28 A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

29 A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.

30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

31 The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the

way of righteousness.

32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. 33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing

thereof is of the LORD.

## MAN MAY ASCEND TO HEAVEN

O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom All things proceed, and up to him return, If not depraved from good, created all Such to perfection, one first matter all, Endued with various forms, various degrees Of substance, and, in things that live, of life But more refined, more spirituous, and pure, As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending Each in their several active spheres assigned, Till body up to spirit work, in bounds Proportioned to each kind. So from the root Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves More aery, last the bright consummate flower Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit, Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed, To vital spirits aspire, to animal, To intellectual; give both life and sense, Fancy and understanding; whence the soul Reason receives, and reason is her being, Discursive, or intuitive; discourse Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours, Differing but in degree, of kind the same. Wonder not then, what God for you saw good If I refuse not, but convert, as you, To proper substance. Time may come, when men With angels may participate, and find No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare; And from these corporal nutriments perhaps Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit, Improved by tract of time, and, winged, ascend Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice, Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell; If ye be found obedient, and retain Unalterably firm his love entire, Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy Your fill what happiness this happy state Can comprehend, incapable of more.

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied. O favourable Spirit, propitious guest, Well hast thou taught the way that might direct Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set From centre to circumference; whereon, In contemplation of created things, By steps we may ascend to God.

Milton.

# THE GLORY OF GOD SEEN BUT IMPERFECTLY ON EARTH.

The stupendous wonders of the universe, serve but to illustrate and proclaim the greatness of that Being who is revealed to us in the divinity of Jesus. In the midst of countless worlds, the Author of all life is seen, surrounded by innumerable immortal spirits, animating, informing, and

governing all, with dignity and love. The more we study these evidences of his power, the more closely do we seem to approach the Divinity. His will, his might, his wisdom, and his love, become familiar to us. We adore his greatness, we contemplate his holiness, with admiring awe. The extent of his power, we cannot define; but we recognize the Wonderful, the Eternal, and feel that he is omnipotent. We are told by St. Paul. that here "we see darkly, as through a glass, but that hereafter we shall behold the Arbiter of all, face to face." He adds, "Now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Yet we feel as if the Deity knew that to gaze on him in all his glory, would be too much for our feeble vision, and in this world we are permitted to obtain but imperfect glimpses of his glory. All will one day be revealed to our matured capacity; and that which is now but a hope, a presentiment, at the most a conviction, will become a blissful certainty. We shall gaze on him in refulgent majesty, when, by his gracious will, we have been permitted to put on immortality.

Incomplete as our information is here, such as it is, we find in it the source of sacred enjoyment. In proportion as we feel our own littleness, we rejoice in the greatness of our God, as proved in the magnificence of his creation; and Oh! how sweet is the thought of a Deity so mighty, and so exalted, condescending to look upon us with compassion, favour, and love!

Yet is there one fearful drawback on the felicity it would impart, when we ask ourselves, What have we done in acknowledgment of bounty so immense? How great is the neglect we are compelled to confess! Alas! we have coveted more the enjoyments of this life, vain and delusive as we know them to be, than the beatitude of immortal spirits. We have weakly forgotten our sublime destiny, to grovel with the worm. We own ourselves abashed at the retrospect we are forced to take, of our course up to this moment. We have regarded things of momentous importance with culpable indifference, while matters of trivial import have called forth all our energies. The concerns of the soul have been forgotten, while those of the passing moment, identified with this transient state of being, have been assiduously studied. Our eyes have been riveted on the earth; we have had no thought of heaven. The praises

of mortals have been sought, while we have felt no anxiety to secure the favour of our Almighty Creator. Though enjoined by our Saviour "to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect," we have turned a deaf ear to the call. Our resolutions, when good, have soon faded away. But must it be ever thus? and shall we weakly still pant for present enjoyments, and lose, by our indolence or depravity, that blissful eternity which the mercy of our God has placed within our reach? Connected with eternity is unspeakable felicity; but if we reject the proffered boon, it

contains for us but an infinity of woe.

May the gospel of Jesus timely supply those consoling hopes which can sustain our trembling spirits, as we advance through life. May confidence in God render us independent and indifferent to all beside; may this be the comfort of our last moments. When anger misleads, or pernicious enjoyments would betray to sin, Oh! still let the words of the Saviour admonish and restrain, and may holy hope be evermore ours, even though men should deride and persecute, and may that, in all circumstances, be our joy and unbending prop. Let it fill our hearts with love, —that love which is fruitful of virtuous exertion and sacred zeal-the love of God. Love, and love only, can bring us to the throne of the Deity, and gain us his approving smile.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 22.

### THE GOSPEL FEAST.

How rich are thy provisions, Lord, Thy table furnished from above, The fruits of life o'er-spread the board. The cup o'er-flows with heavenly love.

Thine ancient family, the Jews, Were first invited to the feast; We humbly take what they refuse, And Gentiles thy salvation taste.

We are the poor, the blind, the lame, And help was far, and death was nigh; But at the gospel call we came, And every want received supply.

From the high way that leads to hell, From paths of darkness and despair, Lord, we are come with thee to dwell, Glad to enjoy thy presence here.

What shall we pay th' Eternal Son That left the heaven of his abode, And to this wretched earth came down, To bring us wanderers back to God?

It cost him death to save our lives. To buy our souls it cost his own; And all the unknown joys he gives Were bought with agonies unknown.

Our everlasting love is due To him that ransomed sinners lost; And pitied rebels when he knew The vast expense his love would cost.

Watts.

#### MEN TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. JOHN XV.

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit in itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for

without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might

remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another,

as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the

Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

## GOD PROPITIATED BY KINDNESS TO MAN.

The true follower of Jesus, who looks for redemption from the blood of Christ, must feel the active exercise of kindly feeling for his fellow men to be his solemn indispensable duty. The Lord has profusely lavished his compassion upon us; and ought not we, then, to feel for each other? To save us he assumed this mortal form, for us he sustained countless indignities, and for us his blood was finally shed. Can we sufficiently

acknowledge such bounty? To repay it, poor, feeble, and dependant as we are, can never be in our power: we may, however, hope, that if, from love of the Saviour, we feed the hungry, give clothing to the naked, and comfort the sick, such doings will be regarded by our Lord as welcome offerings at his shrine; and this evidence of a grateful spirit, we ought ever to be anxious to offer.

Our sins have been atoned for by the sufferings of Jesus; not ours alone, but those of all created men. This we read in scripture; and must we not thence infer, that all are as dearly prized by our Lord as we ourselves? Let us, then, never regard with hatred or scorn any of those whom our Saviour esteemed, and whom it has been his pleasure to purchase, at so great a price of suffering. We must not feel ashamed to view as brothers, those who have been named such by Jesus. Far be this sinful weakness from the true worshippers of God! Can we belong to Christ. if we want the marks by which his followers are known ?--if we keep not the example set by thee, Oh glorious Redeemer! for ever in our sight? Thy devout frame of mind we will endeavour to copy, and thy gracious benevolence for all mankind, we will desire to have so awakened in our hearts, that if it were the will of God so severe a sacrifice should be demanded, we might be prepared to lay down our lives, in order to save our fellow men.

Oh God of undying love! hear our humble entreaties, that thou mayest vouchsafe to warm our hearts, in continuity, with this devotional feeling. Unaided by thee, unsustained by thy grace, we shall remain wanting in sensibility, ungrateful and capricious. Governed by thy blessed Spirit, and having the benignant example of Jesus in our recollection, like him we shall be full of love and mercy; and now and henceforth, our words, thoughts and actions, will prove acceptable before thee, and honour thy sacred name.

So dispose us, Oh Lord! that we may take the shape most worthy of rational beings, the work of thy hand; that we may, like our great Mediator, be eager to conduct into the right way those that have gone astray, to raise the fallen, to comfort the unhappy, and bring the sinner to salvation. This day may afford us many occasions for proving our sincerity as Christians. We may be able to stretch forth a hand to assist those who are weak; it may be in our power to enlighten those who are in error, and to encourage those whose resolution fails; some that are in trouble it may be in our

power to relieve and cheer, and if we cannot more immediately benefit them, we may at least hope to serve them by humble supplications preferred to thee. Let us rejoice in performing this important duty, and deem it, henceforth, the proper business of life. Often will we stretch forth our hands to thee, and implore thee to bless those thou diedst to redeem. Oh Lord! thus walking uprightly before thee, let thy favouring smile descend upon us, that we may become worthy of the joyful existence which thou hast secured for thy faithful worshippers. Look down upon us from thy throne in heaven, and encourage the aspirations of souls that pant to be near thee. Grant these blessings, Redeemer of mankind! and to thy name be all honour, adoration, and glory, now, henceforth, and for ever.

## THE WEAPONS OF CHRIST'S DISCIPLES.

The success of the gospel, independently of its being a literal and most signal fulfilment of prophecy, affords a most striking proof of its truth and divine origin, when we consider the weakness and meanness of the instruments that were employed in this great work. "Destitute of all human advantages, protected by no authority, assisted by no art, not recommended by the reputation of its author, not enforced by eloquence in its advocates, the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. Twelve men, poor and artless, and illiterate, we behold triumphing over the fiercest and most determined opposition,-over the tyranny of the magistrate, and the subtleties of the philosopher,—over the prejudices of the Gen-tile and the bigotry of the Jew." They offered violence to no man; they did not go about to compel any, by force, to entertain the doctrine which they preached, and to enlist under their banner; they were not attended with legions of armed men, to dispose men for the reception of their doctrine, by plunder, by violence, by tortures: neither did they go about to tempt and allure men to their way of thinking and acting by the promises of temporal rewards, and by the hopes of riches and honours; nor did they use any artificial insinuations of wit and eloquence to gain upon the minds of men. On the contrary, they utterly disclaimed, both in word and deed, all violent and harsh measures of proceeding, all force and compulsion upon the human conscience, and all conversions made by the terror of punishment or the sword. The weapons of their warfare were the purity, spirituality, and reasonableness of the doctrines which they delivered, the authority of the high name by whose commission they preached, and the miraculous works which they were enabled to perform: nor did they use any other arms to conquer the virulence of their enemies, and to gain proselytes to the faith, except patience, meekness, humility, submission to the civil power in all things lawful, and universal goodwill to mankind. The followers of Jesus were numerous enough, long before the empire became Christian, to have attempted the way of force, had it been permitted to them: and the insults, the oppressions, the persecutions which they suffered from their pagan enemies, were enough to have provoked the most passive tempers to some acts of hostility and resistance. But every one knows, that they had recourse to no arms, besides those of the Spirit: they took no advantage of distracted times, to raise commotions

in behalf of the new religion, or to suppress the old one: yet with meekness, and patience, and suffering; by piety, by reason, by the secret influence of the divine blessing on these feeble efforts, the doctrine of the cross insensibly gained ground, spread itself far and wide, and in the end became victorious over all the rage, and power, and sophistry of an unbelieving world.

Horne.

# EVENING .-- FEBRUARY 22.

#### HEAVEN IN VIEW.

There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides, And never withering flowers, Death like a narrow sea divides This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood Stand drest in living green; So to the Jews old Canaan stood, While Jordan roll'd between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

O could we make our doubts remove These gloomy doubts that rise, And see the Canaan that we love, With unbeclouded eyes.

Could we but climb where Moses stood, And view the landscape o'er, Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood, Should fright us from the shore.

Watts.

#### GOD'S ANGER PASSES AWAY. PSALM XXX.

1 I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

4 Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his; and give thanks

at the remembrance of his holiness.

thou my helper.

- 5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.
- 6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
  7 Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

8 I cried unto thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?

10 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever

#### THE SINNER NOT TO DESPAIR.

Such are the woes of life, so extensive and general is suffering, that few can boast they are strangers to calamity. Those who command the most costly luxuries, who seem to exult in robust health and uninterrupted prosperity, have still some unconfessed sorrow concealed beneath the smile of fictitious joy. Yet when we behold the care and providence which is extended to myriads of beings, why should we suspect the same overruling Providence has neglected man, and doomed him to be unhappy? Why should we suppose that we are not regarded by the great Creator with compassionate indulgence, when we know that his powerful hand withdrawn, we must instantly sink into our original nothingness. He will never forsake us. He has, till now, sustained, and we shall still be the objects of his love. Our own experience, if that may be trusted, tells us so much in language not to be mistaken. Then let us never despond. He has said, "For a small moment have Î forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, my Redeemer." Yes, protecting mercy will watch over us, and we shall be defended by an Omnipotent arm. All the sorrows we may temporarily know, will eventually tend to our permanent benefit. Satisfied of this, our hearts must never fail: we must never presume to question the goodness of our Maker, even though our sins should appear to have alienated him from his creatures.

The condition of man would be sad if he had to stand before a merciless Deity. Such is not the God who gave us life. That the depravity of a day should bring upon us never-ending woe, would be a condition most pitiable. But can we suspect that a great and good Being would surpass in cruelty the worst of men? No, it cannot be. His word and our own hearts assure us of the contrary, and proclaim him to be a God abounding in mercy. Our transgressions are to us constantly a source of affliction. We look back upon them with shame and regret. But this regret attests his watchful compassion: it warns us to avoid a repetition of the sin, and teaches us

while it is yet time, "to fly from the wrath to come."

No woe is more insupportable than that which we are aware has been brought upon us by our own misconduct; while conscious rectitude cheers us in the midst of circumstances the most adverse. But if we suffer under the conviction of our unworthiness, faith brings heavenly hope, and whispers to us, that though fallen, we are not for ever lost: that the image of the Creator is not to be utterly cast away, but is still the object of his care.

If great our sins, the goodness of the Almighty is more than commensurate to their magnitude. Fallen as we are, God will still regard us with compassion: and on him we can still depend with hope. He will not let us perish eternally.

Jesus died for us. He teaches us in the hour of distress to look for aid and support from the God whom we have offended. "His mercy endureth for ever." "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed from thee, saith the Lord."

May we never forfeit his indulgent love. Truly penitent, we will seek to regain the favour of the Eternal, not by weak regrets, but by zealous earnestness in the cause of truth and virtue. All our comfort we must owe to that compassionate grace, which is secured to us by the sacrifice made in our behalf on Mount Calvary. With this impression we desire to kiss the chastening rod, and submit with dutiful resignation to those sufferings which may fall on us as the righteous punishment for our offences against the Majesty of Heaven. For those who sincerely trust in God, all will be granted that is essential to their ultimate welfare.

### THE BIGHTEOUS IN HEAVEN.

Since Christ assures us, that the very angels (though they be so far from being related to our persons, that they are foreigners to our very nature) receive accession of joy for a relenting sinner, that by repentance begins to turn towards God; you will not think it absurd, that in a place, where charity shall not only conceive, (as St. Paul speaks) but grow perfect, our dear friends should rejoice to see us, not only begin to turn towards God, but come home to him. Nor is it unlikely, that our transported souls shall mutually congratulate each other, their having now fully escaped the numerous rocks, and shelves, and quick-sands, and threatening storms, and no less dangerous calms, through which they are at length arrived at that peaceful haven, where innocence and delight (which are here so seldom matched) are inseparable companions, both of each other, and each blessed resident. With those friends we here lamented, we shall there rejoice. And it will be but need, that

the discovery of each other's virtues should bring us to a mutual knowledge of our persons; for otherwise, we shall be so changed, that we should never know our friends; (and should scarce know ourselves, were not an eminent increase of knowledge a part of that happy change.) For those departed friends, whom, at our last separation, we saw disfigured by all the ghastly horrors of death, we shall then see assisting about the majestic throne of Christ, with their once vile bodies transfigured into the likeness of his glorious body, mingling their glad acclamations with the hallelujahs of thrones, principalities, and powers, and the most dignified favourites of the celestial court. I need not tell you, Lindamor, that we shall be more justly transported at this meeting, than was good old Jacob at that of his son Joseph, whom having long mourned for dead and lost, he found not only alive, but a great favourite, ready to welcome him to an unknown court. For, whereas the Patriarch said to his son, "now let me die, since I have seen thy face;" the seeing of our friends in heaven will assure us, that we shall for ever live with them there.

# MORNING.—FEBRUARY 23.

#### CHRIST THE ONLY GUIDE.

Whither, O whither shall I fly, But to my longing Saviour's breast! Secure within thy arms to lie, And safe beneath thy wings to rest.

I have no might to oppose the foe:
But everlasting strength is thine;
Shew me the way that I should go,
Shew me the path I should decline.

Which shall I leave, and which pursue
Thou only my adviser be:
My God, I know not what to do,
But O! mine eyes are fixed on thee.

Foolish and impotent, and blind,
Lead me a way I have not known;
Bring me where I my heaven may find
The heaven of loving thee alone.

Golden Treasury.

SELF-ABANDONMENT OF THE TRUE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST.
ACTS XX.

16 Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia; for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 ¶ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what

manner I have been with you at all seasons, 12 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befal me there:

23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.



# DEDICATED TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

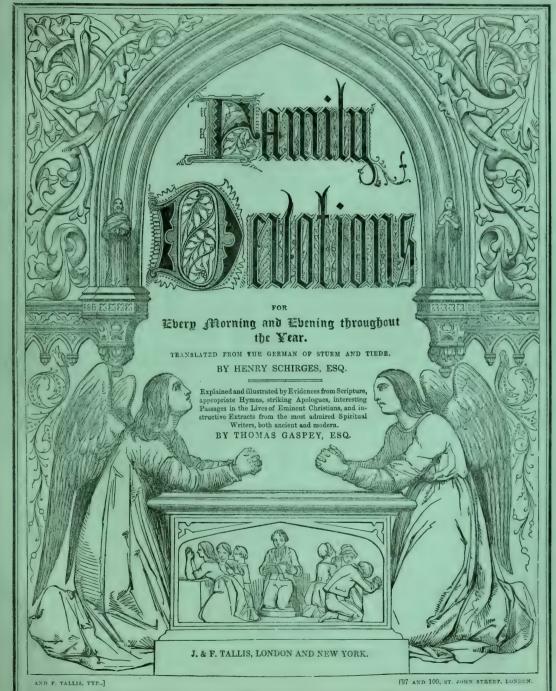
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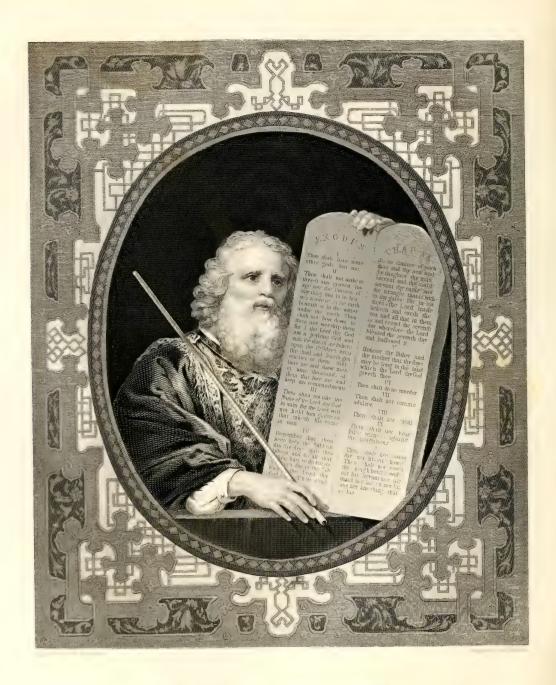
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24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face

26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I am not shunned to declare unto you all the coun-

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

- 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with
- 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
- 33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. 34 Yea, ve vourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.
- 35 I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more.

### CONSOLATION IN CHRIST'S ADVOCACY.

What consolation, what repose, could the sinner, awake to the condition in which he has placed himself, hope to find, how escape the bitter reproaches of an accusing conscience, had he not the privilege of looking up for relief to the Saviour of man? Though sincere our penitence, it comes too late, and cannot correct the mischief we have Yesterday cannot be recalled, and the days which we have devoted to irrational and sinful enjoyments will return no more; nor can that integrity, that purity, once belonging to us, which unhappily is lost. We feel that we have trespassed against our great Creator. We deserve not thy compassion, Oh God! but rather those awful chastisements which are reserved for the wicked. No consolation, then, can we know, but that which has been obtained for us by the intercession of Jesus Christ, who suffered for us in life and in death. To the cross we raise our eyes, with sacred hope, and, remembering that our

Lord was sent to save sinners, we regain tranquillity. What is all the world can bestow, in comparison with that lively hope, that joyous expectation of finding favour in the eves of our God. which this enables us to know? The awful instrument of our Saviour's punishment, by his victory over death, becomes the foundation of a Christian's glory, the source of his happiness, the guarantee that he shall see a blessed eternity. We trust it will never be possible for us to treat the sacred symbol with levity or indifference, that we may never join in the foolish scoffings of those weak and wicked men, who fail to honour a crucified Saviour, and who, in the blind arrogance of their hearts, presume that they want no mediator with their Maker. We will always venerate it as an image of heavenly wisdom, as it shall revive in our minds the Almighty's benevolent scheme for the salvation of fallen man. Looking upon that, our hearts shall gain new resolution to fight manfully against sin and the devil, and eagerly to pursue the track marked by our blessed Redeemer. It shall renew in our thoughts the recollection of the gratitude we owe, on account of the great sacrifice made for us, and it shall move us to sing joyful hosannas to God, and at the same time dispose us to bow, with reverend submission, before his awful throne, yet withal to love him as he has loved us, and still, bearing in mind that he is a spirit, apply ourselves to worship him in spirit and in truth. This hope, this glorious hope, shall lift us above the world we inhabit, to contemplate the blessed abode of our Lord, where he now sits at the right hand of God, the Eternal Father. The misleading allurements of the world shall not, from this time, have power to withdraw us from our devotions; our time shall be better employed, in remembering what we owe to the goodness of God, and how grateful we ought to be to his Son, our Lord, who died a death of shame, that sinners might live to glory.

### RECONCILIATION TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

"God and we were enemies, before we were reconciled to him by his son. He that is to be 'our peace, and to reconcile us unto God, and to slay this enmity,' must have an interest in both the parties that are at variance, and have such a reference unto either of them that he may be able to send this comfortable message unto the sons of men, 'Go to my brethren, and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and to your God.' For as long as 'he is not ashamed to call us brethren. God is not ashamed to be called our God.' And his entering of our appearance, in his own name and ours, after this manner, 'Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me,' is a motive strong enough to appease his Father, and to turn his favourable countenance

towards us: as on the other side, when we become unruly and prove rebellious children, no reproof can be more forcible, nor inducement so prevalent (if there remain any spark of grace in us) to make us cast down our weapons and yield, than this, Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?' and bought thee, 'not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of his own Son.

"How dangerous a matter it is to be at odds with God, old Eli sheweth by this main argument, 'If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall plead or entreat for him?' And Job before him. 'He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment : neither is there any daysman or umpire betwixt us, that may lay his hand upon as both." If this General should admit no manner of exception, then were we in a woeful case, and had cause to weep much more than St. John did in the Revelation, when "none was found in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, that was able to open the book which he saw in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, neither to look thereon.' But as St. John was bidden there to refrain his weeping, because the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, had prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof;' so he himself elsewhere giveth the like comfort unto all of us in particular, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

### EVENING.-FEBRUARY 23.

THE CALL OF THE SPIRIT.

The Spirit in the word. And in his motions cries, "Come to the Fountain-head of life, And come for large supplies,"

Let him who feels his thirst, Nor can endure its rage. Come to salvation's copious springs, And all his pains assuage.

And whosoever will, Is welcome to receive The streams of everlasting life That Heaven will freely give.

Jesus! is this thy voice? We bless the gracious call: And fly with joyful haste to thee, Our Saviour and our all. Golden Treasury.

CHRIST LIVES FOR HIS FOLLOWERS. ROMANS VI.

4 As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall !... live with him :

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth so more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye

should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are

not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ve have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants

of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

### LESSONS FOR HUMAN VANITY.

"They heap up riches, and know not who shall gather them." These words are not less applicable to the present times than they were in those of David. Of the things we now possess, how many are those which certainly were not designedly prepared for us! Could we know the history of our houses, gardens, and fields, but for the last few centuries, great would be our amazement at the facts connected with it. There are fields from which the present insatiable proprietor never thinks he obtains a crop sufficiently large, which, had they speech, might say to him, "Fool that thou art !- five hundred years ago, honest families, fed by me, were accustomed to raise their voices in thankfulness to heaven on my account. Yet thou weakly imaginest now, that from my sterility thou art likely to starve. Yonder mansion was built in past ages by an ambitious man. in the spirit of pride, and with the expectation that it would never be separated from his name and family. Where now is this proud family? Its representatives will be found in the workhouse, or they live as lodgers, in humble tenements, while the poor and despised domestic inhabits the grand chateau. The garden on which my eyes now rest was laid out by a wise man, for his own healthful enjoyment. After a lapse of only thirty years, it is converted into a place of public entertainment, and a rabble of riotous and voluptuous dancers now tread it beneath their feet. Who

will wear the pearls and jewels which adorn contemporary beauty, when that fair form which now sustains them is mouldering in the dust? Truly was it said by the psalmist, "They heap up riches, and know not who shall gather them. Let the arrogance of wealth fortify itself as it may, the third or fourth descendant, could his doings be seen, would inflict the most severe punishment on the original possessor of this splendid domain. How would the miser lament, could he witness the reckless levity with which that property is dissipated, which it cost him such an infinity of toil and parsimony to heap together. The sordid votary of gold starves his body, and neglects his immortal soul, that he may amass treasures—and for whom? "For my children," may be the reply. But the Almighty, perhaps, does not give children; or he may see fit to take them away; and in the sequel it is often found, that the plodder has denied himself the ordinary comforts of life, only to enrich the son of a stranger, or of an enemy. Possibly the son or grandson who inherits what he has saved, is a monster; or the viciously-disposed, badly-educated daughter is glad to find a pleasure-seeking husband, to empty the coffers of her too penurious father. The man who plants this lovely avenue, rarely lives to gaze upon the prospect thence to be surveyed, any more than the conqueror of nations sure to enjoy the ripe fruit of his numerous victories.

All is in the hands of a superior Being. We are labouring at thy harvest: thou callest us away from the sheaves, that others may gather them. Thou disposest all things; and when a family has lived sufficiently long in its castle, it is thine to call it thence, that others may emerge from the obscurity of the hut, to occupy the palace. The proprietor of a noble seat at the commencement of a war, is often forced, before its termination, to resign possession of it to strangers. Such are the endless changes witnessed in this world of strife and sorrow.

Even the spot in which we now meet to exercise our minds in solemn meditation was possibly no more built for us, than was the cemetery in which we have to find a resting place. Our remains may finally be consigned to rot, where in former times rare flowers were grown for the gratification of some luxurious noble. Little can we imagine what was passing, even here, where we now meet, a thousand years ago. When this occurs to us, how forcibly are we reminded that

"We heap up riches, and know not who shall gather them."

Happily, Oh gracious Lord! this, though true. is only true of the treasures of this world. From this day forward, therefore, it shall be our endeayour, not weakly and sinfully to envy the most successful gatherers, but to elevate our thoughts, so that we may aspire to nobler acquisitions. Spiritual goods are to be secured, the heritage of which is not uncertain. They do not change masters, and the faithful Christian who heaps them up, is certain to possess and to enjoy them. It is not a matter of doubt "who will gather them:" and he who neglects to look in time for unearthly treasures, eventually arrives in hopeless poverty at his last sad dwelling. Bending, Oh God! before thy awful throne, we humbly entreat that on us thy blessing may descend, and enable us to secure heavenly wealth! Teach us to exercise rational charity; to give wise counsel, and assist in saving souls. Grant us energy to pursue whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy; cleanse our bosoms, Oh God! wake in us a holy spirit, that may preserve to us through life, for our welfare in eternity, the ineffable blessing of a pure heart, and a conscience free from reproach.

There are some poor sinners in the world, that plainly see a change, a mighty change, in their neighbours and relations that are coming to Jesus Christ. But, as I said, they being ignorant, and not knowing whence it comes, and whither it goes, (for so is every one that is born of the Spirit,) therefore they attribute this change to other causes: as, 1. Melancholy; 2. To sitting alone; 3. To over-much reading; 4. To their going to too many sermons; 5. To too much studying, and musing on what they hear.

Also, they conclude on the other side, 1. That it is for want of merry company.

2. For want of physic; and therefore they advise them to leave off reading, going to sermons, the company of sober people, and to be merry, to go a gossiping, to busy themselves in the things of this world; not to sit musing alone, etc.

But come poor ignorant sinner, let me deal with thee. It seems thou art turned counsellor for Satan: I tell thee thou knowest not what thou dost. Take heed of spending thy judgment after this manner; thou judgest foolishly, and sayest in this, to every one that passeth by, thou art a fool.

What! count convictions for sin, mourning for sin, and repentance for sin, melancholy! This is like those that on the other side said, "These men are drunk with new wine," etc., or, as he that said. Paul was mad.

Poor ignorant sinner! canst thou judge no better? What! is sitting alone pensive under God's hand, reading the scriptures, and hearing of sermons, etc. the way to be undone? The Lord open thine eyes, and make thee to see thine error: Thou hast set thyself against God, thou hast despised the operation of his hands, thou attemptest to murder souls. What! canst thou give no better counsel touching those whom God hath, wounded, than to send them to the ordi-

nances of hell for help? Thou biddest them be merry and sightsome, but dost thou not know, that "the heart of fools is

in the house of laughter?"

Thou biddest them shun the hearing of thundering preachers: "But is it not better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools?" Thou biddest them busy themselves in the things of this world; but dost thou not know that the Lord bids, "First seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof?"

Poor ignorant sinner! hear the counsel of God to such, and learn thyself to be wiser. "Is any afflicted? let him pray: is any merry? let him sing psalms. Blessed is he that heareth me; and hear from time to come. Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Search the scriptures; give attendance to reading. It is better to go to the house of mourning."

And wilt thou judge him that doth thus? Art thou almost like Elymas the sorcerer, that sought to turn the deputy from the faith? Thou seekest to pervert the right ways of the Lord: take heed lest some heavy judgment overtake thee.

Bunyan.

### MORNING.-FEBRUARY 24.

EARTH'S JOYS AND SORROWS SERVE TO REMOVE MAN'S BLINDNESS,

What are meetings here, but partings? What are ecstasies, but smartings? Unions what, but separations? What attachments, but vexations? Every smile but brings its tear, Love its ache, and hope its fear; All that's sweet must bitter prove; All we held most dear remove?

Foes may harm us: but the dearest, Ever, here, are the severest: Sorrows wound us; but we borrow From delight the keenest sorrow: Tis to love our farewells owe All their emphasis of woe; Most it charms that most annoys: Joys are griefs and griefs are joys!

Heavenward rise! 'tis Heaven, in kindness
Mars our bliss, to heal our blindness;
Hope from vanity to sever;
Offering joys that bloom for ever:
In that amaranthine clime,
Far above the tears of time,
Where not fear nor hope intrude,
Lost in pure beatitude!

Anon.

### THE TRUE FAITH. GALATIANS I.

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father;

5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble

you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the ser-

vant of Christ.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my conversation in times past in the Jew's religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God. and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the

traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.

OUR PRESENT CONDITION COMPARED WITH WHAT

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BUT FOR THE

REDEMPTION.

We cannot too often repeat to ourselves how deep-felt our gratitude ought to be, for what our Lord and Saviour has done and suffered for man. Sad would our condition have been, had Christ not died for us. We should certainly have been conspicuous objects in creation, possessed of considerable powers; but no superiority which we could claim would make us feel other than miserable. Denied every exalting hope of glory and immortality, could we value an existence which, in a few days, must finish here, only to plunge us into scenes of everlasting horror. No happiness could be experienced in this life, while we lived in dread of so calamitous a futurity, and most terrific would be the approach of death, when, sinking beneath the stern grasp of the destroyer, there could be in our minds no hope of a blessed resurrection.

When these ideas pass in our minds, it becomes our duty to exalt that bounty which has bestowed upon us privileges the most glorious. Never ought we, rising from our beds in the morning, to omit to recal with tenderness and profound gratitude, the atonement offered by our Lord to save us from perdition. We look forward to live for ever; to live in blessedness, and every revolving day brings our ransomed spirits nearer to the heaven prepared for them. From hour to hour we are cheered with new proofs of the grace of God. We are no longer depressed by the chilling fear that his unrelenting severity will order just vengeance to punish our sins. His blood washed for

transgressors, and the chastisement which must otherwise have fallen upon us, will be spared. It extirpates sin in our hearts, and bestows countless blessings upon us in our progress through life. It gives us firmness under all circumstances, and consoles us in the hour of trouble: still satisfying us that God will be merciful, that he will not eternally condemn those whom Christ lived and died to save.

Yes. O blessed thought! even for us did he perish on the cross, and we shall participate in all the felicity which his self-devotion has purchased for mankind. For us did he endure that weight of woe, that fearful curse, that solemn judgment of his Father. O let our souls incessantly dwell upon this grand, sublime, and astonishing fact, for us did Jesus die! When sin would tempt us to the path of idle pleasure, let us remember that we may not deviate from the proper track. Shall we return to our hateful vices, whose impurity has been washed away by a Redeemer's blood? Be this thought constantly recalled. Shall we scruple to relinquish degrading joys, when Jesus for us abandoned all the glories, all the happiness of his high birth, to suffer intolerable agony. Such reflections will make us stedfast in the cause of truth; it will sustain us in the darkest hour of adversity. What are the troubles which we have to deplore, compared with those afflictions which were known to the Son of God? Think of him, of what he has done, when death alarms, and wild apprehension will be no more. Shall we fear to die, when we know that our great Captain has triumphed over the destroyer. We will serenely prepare to meet Death by never suffering our hearts to grow cold and indifferent towards our Creator. So shall our souls be purified and exalted. By contemplating what Christ has done they will be exalted by holy joy and sincere gratitude, and ever shall our most cherished idea be the love of Jesus, and our anxious desire will be to follow the precepts of the Saviour of Man.

### JOYS OF DEVOTION.

If, already, devotion hath taught thee her secret pleasures, -if, when Nature meets thee in all its magnificence or beauty, thy heart humbleth itself in admiration before the Land which made it, and rejoiceth in the contemplation of the wisdom by which it is maintained,-if, when revelation unveils her mercies, and the Son of God comes forth to give peace and hope to fallen man,-thine eye follows with astonishment, the glories of his path, and pours, at last, over his cross, those pious tears, which it is a delight to shed ;-if thy soul accompanieth him in his triumph over the grave, and entereth on the wings of faith into that heaven, "where he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," and seeth "the society of angels, and of the spirits of just men, made perfect," and listeneth to the "everlasting song which is sung before the throne;"-If such are the meditations in which thy youthful hours are passed, renounce not, for all that life can offer thee in exchange, these solitary joys. The world, which is before thee, the world, which thine imagination paints in such brightness, has no pleasures to bestow which can compare with these. And all that its boasted wisdom can produce, has nothing so acceptable in the sight of heaven, as this pure

offering of thy infant soul.

In these days, "the Lord himself is thy shepherd, and thou dost not want. Amid the green pastures, and by the still waters" of youth, he now makes thy soul to repose. But the years draw nigh, when life shall call thee to its trials; the evil days are on the wing, when "thou shalt say thou hast no pleasure in them;" and as thy steps advance, "the valley of the shadow of death," opens through which thou must pass at last. It is then that thou shalt know what it is to "remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." In these days of trial, or of awe, "his spirit shall be with you," and thou shalt fear no ill; and, amid every evil which surrounds you, "he shall restore thy soul. His goodness and mercy shall follow thee, all the days of thy life;" and when at the last, "the silver cord is loosed, thy spirit shall return to the God who gave it, and thou shalt dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

### EVENING.—FEBRUARY 24.

### PRAYER.

Father! look down upon thy wayward child, And from thy throne above Forgive the torrent of this worship wild. The might of earthly love; The anxious thought—the spirit-chafing care, The mist of doubt, that darkens even prayer!

Forgive, that thus, round dust, our hearts can twine. In fond idolatry;

Bright with Hope's greenest clusters, as the vine Around its tree;

Father, forgive, and guide thy wanderers back, Through lost Earth's Eden, to thy footsteps track!

Forgive, that wavering in our heavenly trust, Wild dreams of fear

Spread o'er our earthly hearts Care's cankering rust, Unmindful thou art near! Forgetful, though the angry storm be loud,

Faith's rainbow hues gleam brightest on the cloud! And by the past-by thy sustaining love-

Thy never changing truth; And by thy peace, that like the brooding dove Watched o'er our youth ; Oh! let us leave dark thoughts and boding fears

With thee who holdest all our future years.

Though far within the human heart's deep cell Lurk thoughts of grief; As blight in fairest flowers will ofttimes dwell,

Folded within the leaf; We'll shrink not, through life's wilderness of night, If but the cloud be kindled into light!

Personne.

SEEK KNOWLEDGE AND FEAR GOD. PROV. XV.

14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh know-ledge; but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife; but he *that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.

19 The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

20 A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellers they are established.

23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.
28 The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the

29 The leart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the

prayer of the righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good

report maketh the bones fat.

31 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

32 He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul:

but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

### DREAMS SENT FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF MAN.

"When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions." We have often to complain of visitations like those described in the solemn language of Job. There are many who are fearfully disturbed in the hours appropriated to rest, whose minds are thus assailed by anguish unknown before; more especially if the images presented to them have any relation to the scenes in which they have mingled. or the ideas which they have indulged while awake. Even in our dreams there is something astonishing and incomprehensible, from the strange activity of our minds, in moments when they cease to receive immediate impressions from external circumstances, through the medium of the senses, and seem to act quite independent of the will, and even of the body which they inhabit.

In the wonderful creations of Fancy—ever restless Fancy—we seem to be now transported to a paradise-now sunk to an abyss of hopeless misery. Learned sages, in bygone days, have laboured to solve the mystery in vain. In the middle ages, it was attempted to establish a system upon dreams, called oneiromancy, by which grave professors undertook to determine the state of the body as to health, from these monuments of the mind. A higher aim shall be ours. In us they shall wake but increased admiration of the ways of the Almighty, and those which have reference to the secret inclinations and desires of our hearts, we will regard as unbought witnesses, who testify for or against our waking actions. Of hints thus mercifully supplied, we will endeavour to avail ourselves, to gain a more perfect knowledge of our own hearts; for they disclose to us our inward imaginings, and frequently place admonitory images before our eyes. The vices, the follies, the errors, to which we abandon ourselves in a dream, may well make us tremble, lest our souls, even with our eyes open, should, by reason of our proneness to sin, be betrayed into similar courses. If sleeping we revile our benefactor, seek to shed the blood of our enemy, or waste our substance in gratifying low and unhallowed desires; if we surrender ourselves up to evil passions; or if we exult on thrones or in palaces—Oh! then let us be on our guard; for there is danger that the soul that can thus for a moment be occupied, has lost its native purity, and may in the coming day he tempted to yield to the like seductions. Let the painful dreams of the night be to us a solemn warning! They should teach us temperance.

"Dull dreams instruct, nor sport vain dreams in vain."

Was it not the excesses of the day, the overloaded stomach, the fevered blood, that interfered with our rest? Let us suspect this, and by more cautious abstinence, and proper activity, secure to ourselves, for the future, the blessing of calm and refreshing sleep.

Dreams have often bewildered the weak, and perplexed the wise. There have been instances in which they have so directly led to the detection of crimes, secretly committed in the midnight hour, against divine and human laws, that the beholders could not but regard them as sent by an over-ruling Providence, to punish and confound the guilty. On the other hand, it must be confessed, that the infinitely greater number of these

visitations can be traced to no cause, and have apparently no object. They frequently embody all that is monstrous, inconsistent and absurd. Though active, the mind seems like a vessel tossed in a troubled sea, with no competent hand at the helm, to guide it towards its proper destination, or towards any port in which it may calmly repose. Yet in this strange chaos we are proved the possessors of powers for which, waking, we can hardly give ourselves credit. Scenes that we witnessed twenty, thirty, or forty years ago, which have long ceased to be remembered, are revived as freshly as the events of yesterday; and those who have long slumbered in the grave, are brought before us in the vigour of life, or in the freshness of youth. We engage in conversations, and ideas, and arguments are put by us into the mouths of those with whom we seem to speak, that were never used, or known to us before.

On dreams which cannot inform our minds. nor teach us righteousness, we will not dwell. The interpretation of visions belongs to God. We will not look to them as indicating future events; they shall not disturb the serenity of our minds.

So resolved, we now confidently commit ourselves to thy protecting care, Oh God! We implore thy mercy, while recalling, with sincere regret, the errors of the day which has just closed. Have we not, while passing through it, in many respects acted with the wild inconsistency of a dreaming man? Ought we not to have been more staid and considerate? Many precious hours have been wasted in idle reveries. In spite of all the timely warnings from heaven, we have abandoned ourselves to the dangerous waking dreams of imagination, and only revived from these to indulge in unchristianlike repinings, and weak discontent. Mean and ungrateful, we have forgotten thee, our bountiful Father and our God, and doubted thy goodness, when the real world was not like that which had been pictured to us in our dreams. To thee we now offer our solemn vow, from this time forward, to watch and pray, that by thy gracious mercy we may not be led into temptation; and so resolved, we seek that refreshing sleep which it is thine to send to the weary, in the confident expectation that thou wilt deign to protect us while we repose, and grant us the blessing of waking again to a joyful morrow, then to exult in health and comfort, and in the soul-cheering hope that we shall live to experience new proofs of thy benignity and love.

GOD'S WISDOM AND POWER CONFESSED OF OLD.

Nothing is more frequent among the Latins, than the titles of Jupiter Omnipotens, Optimus Maximus. He is generally acknowledged to be the Creator and governor of the world, upon which account they call him, Opifex rerum, and Rector mundi. It is an acknowledgment of Tully, Nihil est quod Deus efficere non possit, and quidem sine nullo labore. "There is nothing which God cannot do, and that without any kind

By reason. If the power of God could be limited or circumscribed, it must either be by something of greater power, which is inconsistent with the notion of his being supreme and sovereign: or else by the difficulty and repugnancy which there is in the nature of things; which could not be in the first creation of them, because there was nothing then to make any resistance, and since that, there is nothing but what was made by him, derived from him, and is dependent upon him, and therefore must be subject to him. And besides, all such things being finite must therefore be at a vast distance of in-

equality from the infinite power of God.

To which may be added, that all his other perfections would be insignificant and ineffectual; if his power of acting, whereby they were to be communicated to inferior natures, were not answerable to them. Mere knowledge without power would be but an idle speculation; wisdom to contrive, without power to effect, would be but vain and useless. What could his goodness and mercy signify to us, if he were not able to give any proofs of it? And so likewise for his justice and faithfulness, which there would be no reason to fear or to depend upon, if rewards and punishments were not at his disposal. and he had not sufficient power to perform what he had promised, Nor could there be any sufficient ground for his being acknowledged the supreme lawgiver. For why should any one take upon him to intermeddle in the affairs of the world, and to prescribe laws to others, who had no power to dispose of things, and were not able to enforce obedience to his own laws?

In brief, without the belief of this attribute, there can be no foundation for religion amongst men; because there could be no ground for our faith or trust, no reason for our hope or fear.

All sorts and professions of men, of any special eminence, as princes, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, poets, artists, have had great impressions upon their minds concerning a future state. And it may be reasonably presumed (as Tully observes) that those who do so much excel others in their parts and their virtue, are not generally mistaken in their judgments about a natural truth. Bishop of Chester, 1680.

### BELIEVERS ADMONISHED.

You believe that Jesus Christ came into the world both to to be a propitiation for sin, and also to give us an example of a godly life, and yet continue contentedly in the practice of those sins for which he poured forth his soul, in the pursuit of those vices which the gospel disallows, and in the indulgence of those desires which your own consciences condemn. Think, I entreat you, of these words in the 50th psalm; unto the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do, that thou shouldst take my covenant into thy mouth: seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?" This question is now proposed to our consciences, that we may be aware in time of the danger of insincerity, and not "perish with a lie in our right hands." If we cannot answer it now, what shall we say in that awful hour when God shall speak in ten thousand thunders to all who, in this life, presumed to mock him with an empty outside worship? "drawing near him with their lips, when their hearts were far from him.

John Newton.

### MORNING.—FEBRUARY 25.

THE COMING OF CHRIST ANNOUNCED FROM ABOVE.

A glory lingers in the skies
Where slow the sunset fades,
Still gilding with its crimson dyes,
The evening's deeper shades.

A radiant cloud is floating there, Like heaven's transparert gold, And hides ethereal visions fair With many a pearly fold.

For sometimes from behind its screen,
Dim forms will seem to glide,
Away into the far serene
Where angels pure abide.

Or waving back awhile reveals,
A glimpse of vista bright:
Whose beauty o'er the spirit steals
Like hope's enhancing light.

This glorious pageant in the sky, Has some mute errand done, And beckons, as its shadows fly Beyond the dying sun.

And tells of an approaching hour,
When on a cloud of light,
The Son of God will come in power,
And all his glory bright.

Anon.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD IN THE NAME OF CHRIST. EPHESIANS V.

- 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
  - 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what
- the will of the Lord is.

  18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but
- 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; bu be filled with the spirit;
- 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord:
- 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;
- 21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as
- unto the Lord.
  23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ
- is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

  24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let
  the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.
- 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it:
- 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing
- of water by the word.

  27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
- 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself.
- 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church;
- 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

- 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one
- 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

### THE RICHES OF GOD.

If it be our object to render ourselves acceptable in the sight of God, we should constantly turn our thoughts to the atoning sacrifice of Christ. This we must of necessity do, if we would participate in the mighty boon designed by the Redeemer for penitent sinners. That must be the principle by which our whole lives are regulated. It must be our study to please the Saviour who suffered for us. Love ought to pervade our hearts, take precedence of all other affections, and shew itself by tempering our violence, and correcting and refining our ideas.

To earthly friends we owe affectionate regard, but what friend has, or could manifest kindness for us like that of our Redeemer. " No one can have a greater love than this, that he lose his life for his brethren." So we are truly told in the gospel, and so much Christ has done for us. Has he not then a just claim to our love and confidence, surpassing that which any earthly attachment can inspire? But interest, simple sordid interest, a rational selfishness, would lead us to pay him all homage. Would we gain dignity and honour, what dignity, what glory can we compare with those which are secured to us by the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf? Do we covet riches? where are such abundant riches to be found as those to which he calls us, which he invites his followers to share with him, the glories of an immortal life? If we covet pleasure, what pleasure so exquisite as that in which a reconciled God permits us to revel? If we seek something more exalted than pleasure, if we aspire to wisdom, what wisdom is there to compare with the stores of heavenly knowledge unfolded to our view, when we turn our attention to the cross of Christ? Here we gain that art which is wanting to the wisest of the sons of men, the basis of every virtue, the art of self-denial. This will carry us serenely rejoicing through life, and eventually insure a victory over the grave. If we feel an earnest desire for long life, it is here presented to us, a life which will know no end, an eternity of felicity proffered by the giver of all good.

Wisely then should we adopt a firm unyielding resolution, to devote all our thoughts to the crucified Saviour. Happy shall we be if love for him who died on Calvary fill our whole souls. We pray-devoutly, anxiously pray-that this may increase and fructify in us. To love thee we must ever feel is a sacred duty. No circumstances that may arise shall withdraw us from devotion to thee. Many allurements may be spread before us this day, but stedfast in our determination, the cross, the image at once of thy suffering and thy glory, as well as of our salvation, shall alone have charms for me. Our friends we will regard with sincere affection, but no true friend will desire us to forget him who died to save mankind. We will seek wisdom, but more especially that wisdom which was breathed by Jesus of Nazareth. All the visible glories of creation we will admire with delight, but still more will we admire him who has provided for us joys more lasting than all the varieties of nature could yield. Not utterly negligent will we be of worldly reputation, but no honour can we deem equal to that of being the follower, the disciple of Jesus. Life we will not despise, but more than life itself must we value the name of him who laid down life for us, and be prepared to sacrifice this existence to his glory, should such an offering be required at our hands. A sacrifice so awful might to us, weak as we are, be distressing; but if we feel this, so much greater should be the gratitude we must acknowledge for the sacrifice made on the part of our Lord. May our hearts ever glow with holy transport at the thought. That will sustain us for the present, and enable us cheerfully to await the future. Supported by our divine Mediator, we desire with a joyful mind to resign all earthly goods that may stand between us and his love, even those that are most dear to us, and living or dying, to do all that may lay in our power to honour his holy name.

### CHRISTIANS ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH.

We might expect a world of spared rebels to be full of repentance. But how few are there whose consciences, whose conversation savours of true penitence! We might hope a world blessed with the news of redemption would be full of faith. But the ambassadors of peace have bitterly exclaimed, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" Oh, what an insipid world would this be, devoid of evangelical religion! had not the arm of the Lord been revealed to bring you to Christ, and make you the salt of the earth, to keep a savor of Christ. Ve might think a world peopled by one family should abound with love. But how destitute would it be of disinterested benevolence, were not believers the salt of the earth! A world full of spiritual, immortal beings, should savour of immortality. In what an insipid state must it be, if there were none governed by eernal motives; if all hearts were engrossed

by time! But you, believers, are the salt of the earth; to keep immortality and heaven from being quite forgotten.

But the moral world is not only become insipid-it is altogether corrupt; instead of being full of a right taste, it is full of a very bad one; which would spread more and more, did not God interpose to check it and rectify it, by means of this salt. Men are not only ignorant of God, but entertain and love false notions of him, and prefer idols before him. They are not only ungrateful; but prone to murmuring at his providential government. They are not only negligent of his service, but enemies to his holy law: full of opposition and rebellion; corrupted by pride, impenitence, and unbelief. They are disposed to justify themselves and reject the gospel; full of disorderly affections, and bitter passions; of impurity, unrighteousness, worldliness, covetousness, falsehood, envy, strife, discord; sins of all sorts. Oh, how do these mischiefs spread over all the globe! Genuine Christianity alone can give them an effectual check. Did not God make use of this salt to prevent the direful effects of corruption, universal dissolution and destruction must follow. God himself must abominate the world he had made, and cast it out of his sight. And indeed, men's wickedness would destroy themselves and each other.

Thus Christians are the salt of the earth: for there is no savor of wisdom, holiness, love, heavenly peace, and joy, but what is retained by a few real saints, who are chosen out of the world, redeemed from its vain conversation, called and renewed by divine grace: who though in the world are not of it, but passing through it into eternal rest. Meanwhile, the men of the world wonder at them as men of singular taste; they hate them and cast them out, and evil intreat them, though the earth itself is preserved for their sakes; and on their account are judgments often averted from the places where they dwell.

But may it be our concern to retain and spread our proper savor! And let us not forget, that as salt is the greatest preservative in the natural world, its qualities are also penetrating and communicating; and so is the holy, religious conversation of Christians.

Ryland.

### EVENING.—FEBRUARY 25.

### GOD IMPLORED TO VANQUISH UNBELIEF

There is a voice of sovereign grace Sounds from the sacred word; Oh! ye despairing sinners come And trust upon the Lord.

My soul obeys th' almighty call,
And runs to this relief;
I would believe thy promise, Lord:
Oh! help my unbelief.

Stretch out thine arm, victorious king, My reigning sins subdue; Drive the old dragon from his seat, And form my soul anew.

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm, On thy kind arms I fall: Be thou my strength and righteousness, My Jesus and my All.

Golden Treasury.

THOSE WHO ENDURE WITH PATIENCE GOD WILL EVEN-TUALLY CONSOLE. LAMENTALIONS III.

24 The LORD is my portion, faith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

25 The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the

soul that seeketh him.

26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath

borne it upon him.
29 He putteth his mouth in the dust: if so be there

may be hope.

30 He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him; he is filled full of reproach.

31 For the LORD will not cast off for ever:

32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children

34 To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth,

35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High.

36 To subvert a man in his cause, the LORD approveth not.
37 ¶ Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the LORD commandeth it not?

38 Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?

### THE IMPORTANCE OF A DAY.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Such were the words of our Saviour; and never in the course of his earthly career, did he allow a single day to pass without occupying himself with those labours which the Almighty had deputed him to perform. With kindred anxiety for the discharge of an important duty, "I have lost a day," was the exclamation of a heathen emperor, when, at the return of evening, he was unable to recollect that he had performed some good action since the morning dawned. We, if duly conscious of the vast importance of time, should prefer losing all we have, our goods, and our most valuable possessions, and even our friends, rather than wholly overlook the importance of a single day. What is a day? we ask. True, it comprehends but twenty-four hours, and seems no very considerable portion of the passing year; and many future years may possibly be in store for us. But of this can any breathing mortal be certain? The past and the future are not within our grasp; the present alone is ours. This is all we can have of time in our possession; and ought it to be viewed as of small importance, even though we could hope to see millions of days? But such is not the case. Under favourable circumstances we can scarcely hope, altogether, to number more than twenty thousand; and what proportion of this number can we satisfy ourselves are now in reserve for us? If we have reason to suppose that we have already lived through more than half the period ordinarily granted to the life of man, will this not strongly urge that it is our duty to make the best possible use of what may remain, and to apply ourselves to devout exercises on each returning morning, to regulate our conduct as if that were the last we could be permitted to see; resolute to defer the performance of no duty till to-morrow, that can be fulfilled to-day. The future years to which we may look forward, are involved in uncertainty. We may be allowed to survive to old age; but of that no mortal can be sure; on that no wise man will place dependance.

It is an awful thought—but in a single day a man may gain or lose all that would secure his eternal happiness. Years and years must pass away before he can become great, renowned, or old; but to become what surpasses all else in value, a pious man, a single day may suffice: each in succession offers us the means by which we may secure eternal bliss. If we do not use these promptly and zealously, we forfeit our birthright, and abandon, by listless folly and negligence, our claim to salvation. How madly criminal is it, then, to trifle with time, on the improvement of which immortal happiness depends! Infinitely more dangerous is such culpable neglect, than it would be to place fire and gunpowder among the playthings of our children. What if the voice of a superior being, not of this world, were to say to us, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die this day," should we not, in such a case, deem the boon of a single added day, a most important grant from heaven? Even the fool learns, at the near approach of death, to appreciate the value of time, thrown away before in idle reveries, and often complained of as a burden. What can this wide world contain, that is more important than a day? Does not each morrow in succession reveal more distinctly the greatness and the bounty of our Almighty Creator? We are incessantly reminded of his attributes, and his continued love for man. Every hour brings with it something to illustrate the power, the wondrous forbearance, and the holiness of God. Oh! how numerous have been the blessings bestowed, and the offers of salvation made to us, which we have unhappily neglected or refused! Inducements to do good, and opportunities for sinning, have laid in our path: we have carelessly disregarded the former, and greedily availed ourselves of the latter.

Let us be deeply moved by the momentous reflection, that within the limits of a single day we may do much for the welfare of our own souls, and much that may tend to the eternal benefit of our fellow men. Our example may influence them to take that course which will ultimately conduct them to happiness or misery. Whether we think or speak, laugh or weep, give or receive, each may have consequences which will extend to eternity. How fearful the idea! Why should we lose a moment in repenting our sins-in correcting our errors? Why should we not unceasingly labour, as we know our God-as we know our Saviour has done? Fly not so swiftly, ye passing hours! Stay a little, too rapidly-closing day, that of thy last moments I may make a worthy use! Let me fill them up with the devotional feelings which I now prove, and let them carry in their flight, my faith my penitence, my love of Jesus, to eternity. Humbled by a sense of my own guilt, I dare hardly lift my eyes to heaven, smite my breast, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yet this prayer I venture to breathe; -and now, ve minutes, away !-- Whither ve go, I shall follow: go and present before the Most High my true repentance—and then, my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! thou wilt not repel a trembling pilgrim, who humbly prays for thy mediation and support; but thou wilt bless his earnest desires for amendment, and graciously favour his aspiring to gain the bright reward of piety, the crown of everlasting life.

### SELF-DENIAL THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.

When fascinating pleasures put on the mask of charity, the Christian is not deceived by it. He knows that the very essence of Christian benevolence is self-denial, and he is. therefore, sure that when he is invited to deck out his person in the rich trappings of fashion, and to devote a night to the pleasures of dissipation,-to mix in the giddy dance, and take his fill of gaiety-under the pretext of relieving the widow and the orphan,-he is sure, I say, that there is some deception practised on him by the enemy of his soul; he detects the imposture, and he refuses the bribe. No, he would say, if it is consistent and proper for a Christian to frequent the ballroom for his own amusement-let him go-and let him on another occasion give his money in charity-but let him not for a moment delude himself with the idea that he is doing a charitable action by purchasing a ticket for his own pleasure -a fractional part of which only descends to the widow and the orphan! Let him deny himself the pleasure, and give the whole price of his ticket to the needy widow and orphan, and this will be charity! Nor is the man whose heart is really crucified to the world to be beguiled into worldly conformity by the attempted intermixture of things sacred and profane. A cathedral may be turned into a place of public amusement, and desecrated to the purposes of musical performances, which do not even pretend to the character of devotional or

religious duties-and the Christian again may be assailed by the combined pleas of religion and charity—the sacredness of the place, and the benevolence of the object. But again he discovers the hollowness of the plea-he conceives that the house of God is perverted from its legitimate objects by such amusements-and that public singers, hired for the purpose of public amusement, cannot be introduced into a place of worship without great impropriety-and that the frequent, and often unmeaning, repetition of the most sublime language of holy scripture, and even of the awful name of God himself, on such occasions, is a painful breach of the fifth commandment. However attractive, therefore, the charms of music to his earthat innocent though simply carnal enjoyment will not tempt him to please himself, under the pretence of charity-nor to sanction a desecration alike of God's word, and God's house, under the plea of religion. As he reads the public announcement of this week of pleasure, he perceives that "the performances" in the cathedral are rightly classed with "the performances" in the ball-room-he cannot see how to separate the one from the other, or both from the world to which he is crucified-and, therefore, he prefers self-denial to self-indulgence, and sends direct to the institution the whole sum which he had intended to have divided between the world-spurious religion and fictitious charity. Rev. F. Close.

### MORNING.-FEBRUARY 26.

DESPISE NOT THE VICIOUS.

The heart hath tendrils like the vinc That round another's bosom twine Outspringing from the living tree Of deeply-seated Sympathy-Whose flowers are Hope, whose fruits are Bliss -Beneficence its harvest is.

There are some bosoms dark and drear, That an unwatered desert are: Yet there a curious eye may trace Some smiling spot, some verdant place, Where little flowers, the weeds between, Spend their soft fragrance all unseen.

Despise them not; for Wisdom's toil Hath ne'er disturb'd that stubborn soil: But Care and Culture might have brought The ore of Truth from mines of Thought, And Fancy's fairest flowers have bloom'd Where Truth and Fancy lie entomb'd.

Insult him not-his blackest crime May, in his Maker's eye sublime, In spite of all thy pride, be less Than e'en thy daily waywardness-Than many a sin and many a stain Forgotten and impressed again.

There is in every human heart Some not completely barren part, Where seeds of truth and love might grow, And flowers of generous virtue blow; To plant, to watch, to water there, This be our duty-this our care.

Dr. Bowring. GOD CAN PROTECT THE RIGHTEOUS FROM EVIL.

DANIEL III.

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand. O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou

hast set up.

19 ¶ Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of furv, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to

cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into

the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-

nego, fell down bound in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellers, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? they answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form

of the fourth is like the Son of God.

26 ¶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

27 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellers, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire and heat had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither was their coats changed, nor the

smell of fire had passed on them.

28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.

# MERCIES FROM GOD TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY KINDNESS TO MAN.

We should ever be anxious to retain in our minds that boundless love which induced our Saviour to labour so long, and suffer so much, to ensure the salvation of weak offending mortals, for whom he did not omit to pray to his Eternal Father, even while writhing in the agonies of death. Christianity is the fruitful source of unnumbered blessings to our race; it banishes impure ideas, and elevates the mind. Yet these advantages, unhappily, man often forgets, as well as their gracious author. They hear his astonishing history with cold indifference; they resign themselves to listless insensibility, and feel no love for the Redeemer. If we must continue to deplore

that others regard not his holy name, let us apply ourselves more anxiously to remember it. In our memory his sorrows shall live, and still, as we recal the glorious theme, our thanks ought to ascend to God, that, through his matchless bounty, we may exult in having been redeemed.

And great is our cause for rejoicing. What happiness is there like peace of mind, and what peace of mind is there to be compared with that which springs from true religion? Christ is a benefactor to the human race, for that he taught them to spurn idolatry, and all the wildness of pagan folly. Through him a new moral light was

poured upon the world.

Now, from each imagination, let us dismiss all ordinary joys and feelings, and give ourselves wholly up to joyous meditation on our Saviour's love. What should awake in us a warmer sympathy for our afflicted fellow creatures, than the recollection of his offering himself to snatch us from perdition, and of the resignation with which he drank from the bitter cup which it was not the will of his Father should pass from him, that our salvation might be complete.

Reflecting that he has endured such extreme anguish, should we hesitate to sacrifice our dearest gratifications for the welfare of others? No!—ambitious of treading in his footsteps, we will submit to pain ourselves, that others may be spared; we will not hesitate to move in that direction which charity points out; we will love others as Christ loved us; as he laid down his life for us, we will be content, should circumstances

require it, to die for them.

While musing on these grave subjects, while looking at a Saviour's unbounded compassion, a dread steals over us, that these feelings, which we deem to be sacred, may be effaced by the ordinary cares of life, which the advancing day must bring. Grant in mercy, Oh Father! that we may not be carried away from that which is holy, by love of the follies of this life, or the vain applause of thoughtless men. Govern our hearts, so that we may incessantly have thy greatness in mind, and never lose sight of what Christ has done for the human family. Should new blessings descend upon us, we will remember that all proceeds from him,—that all were won by his anguish and fortitude. And Oh! should our treacherous hearts sinfully incline to the vanities of life, again let the memorable scene on the Mount of Olives, of a suffering Saviour, instantly recur to us, and let that admonish us to turn from our evil ways, that thou,

so far as we are concerned, may not have suffered in vain, while doing penance for our transgres-Should love for thee abate, let a retrospective glance at that fearful scene renew our When our consciences are oppressed with melancholy, and at length, by thy mercy, gain relief, let us think of the misery which Jesus endured to restore us to comfort. In all the coming scenes of life, should we manifest weakness and irresolution when adversity lours, let that determination with which thou didst bear all that the cruelty of mortal persecutors could inflict, make us feel that our woes are but trifles, compared with the agonies our blessed Lord has known. These reminiscences of our great Mediator cannot fail to prove to us a safeguard gaainst sin; a comfort in moments of severest sorrow. They will cheer us as we advance to eternity, and furnish us, in life's closing scene, with an antidote that will neutralize the venom of Death's shaft, by the animating assurance that we shall be rendered immortal and happy.

### GOD'S COVENANT.

This covenant of the blessed Trinity is unalterable, being ordered in all things, and sure. All the subjects of its grace shall infallibly be saved, according to our Lord's prayer, viz. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Trusting to these immutable securities, the heirs of promise are commanded to draw strong consolation, even to rejoice in Jesus with a fulness of ioy—in darkness as well as walking in light—in winter as well as in summer—in adversity as well as in prosperity—in death as well as in life; because he has all power in heaven and earth to make good to them every covenant engagement: and he will do it; for the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and shall come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever.

O thou most blessed God and Saviour, thou art the Lord, our righteousness and our strength. I believe that the whole Israel of God shall be justified ONLY by thee, and that in thee ONLY shall they glory. Oh! let thy spirit abide with me, to increase in me this faith; that by fresh supplies of his grace I may be kept from going about to establish my own rightoousness, and may constantly submit myself to the righteousness of God: and by the same grace help me to bring forth the fruits of righteousness abundantly unto the glory and praise of God, magnifying thine atonement in the peace of my conscience; exalting thy righteousness in the love of my heart, and in my walk and warfare glorifying thy fulness; so that out of it I may be receiving a sufficiency of grace, by which I am now enabled to bless thee for the hope of glory. To thee, Almighty Jesus, for the work of righteousness, which is peace, and for the effect of righteousness, which is quietness and assurance for ever; to thee be everlasting praise.

Amen and Amen.

Romaine.

### EVENING.-FEBRUARY 26.

### GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT.

Blest is the nation where the Lord Hath fixed his gracious throne; Where he reveals his heavenly word, And calls their tribes his own.

His eye with infinite survey,
Does the whole world behold;
He formed us all of equal clay,
And knows our feeble mould.

Kings are not rescued by the force Of armies from the grave; Nor speed nor courage of a horse, Can the bold rider save.

Vain is the strength of beasts or men, To hope for safety thence; But holy souls from God obtain A strong and sure defence.

God is their fear, and God their trust:
When plagues or famines spread,
His watchful eye secures the just
Among ten thousand dead.

Lord, let our hearts in thee rejoice, And bless us from thy throne; For we have made thy word our choice, And trust thy grace alone.

Watts.

### THE DAY OF DEATH NOT TO BE DREADED. ECCLES. VII.

1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of his countenance the heart is made better.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

5 It is better to bear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.
6 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot; so is the

laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

7 ¶ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift

destroyeth the heart.

8 Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof:

and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to the angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

16 Be not righteous overmuch: neither make thyself over

wise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?

17 Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why

shouldest thou die before thy time?

18 It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this: yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

# DEATH IMAGED BY SLEEP, FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF MAN.

All was sorrow in the house of Jairus. They lamented a dear one untimely withdrawn from life, in the bloom of youth. It was then that the voice of the Comforter was heard: "Why make you this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." Such were the words of Jesus. But those who heard his speech, were disposed to laugh him to scorn, for they were all assured that she whom they mourned was no more. Their mistake can only be accounted for by the striking resemblance which sleep presents to death. In the same way that we, when we go to rest for the night, remove from our persons every thing that had distinguished us from others, in the course of the day, we shall eventually, when we pass to the tomb, throw off everything that belonged to mortality, every peculiar mark of terrestrial life. All the goods which we have toiled to acquire, we must leave behind, and though we should here wear ermine, and be decorated with ribbons and stars, orders, and other marks of grandeur; nay, though we claimed crowns and sceptres as our own, we must give up all. Our spiritual goods—the treasure we have laid up elsewhere, will alone remain to us, and be ours in eternity. As we now recline, addressing ourselves to our Maker in prayer, for rest during the night, so at the close of life, will the heart awake to the importance of immortal things, desire to be withdrawn from terrestrial labours on the eve of dissolution. This longing, which in the hey-day of life, while the pleasures of the senses engross our minds, is rarely felt, we eventually realise, as the salutary result of sickness and decay. It is an invaluable benefit, prepared for us by the losses and by the sorrows which we have to deplore, in our passage to the grave. In this we should recognise a proof of the goodness of our great Creator, that the struggle we have to endure should not be too dreadful for the weakness of our nature, when it is his good pleasure to call us to himself.

It ought, however, while yet we are in possession of health, and the day of our going hence may be distant, to be our constant care, so to exercise our minds, that sorrow and disease may not be wanting to wake our souls to a pious longing for a better life. Let us form a proper estimate of the sublimity and importance of the soul. Let us accustom ourselves to a rigid selfexamination, and ask our hearts, at the close of each succeeding day, whether we are prepared to lie down in our coffins, as tranquilly as we can repair to our beds for the night. As the couch, on which we seek repose, is the more calm and refreshing from our having passed the day in sober exercises, free from dissolute indulgence, so may we expect that the grave will be more peaceful, and our rest more profound, from our lives having been prudently and virtuously spent. The heated blood of the reveller—the emaciated form of the mad voluptuary—the hurried pulses of the revengeful man, drive sleep from the couch. Is not this a salutary and important lesson, which we derive from our nightly experience? As in our sleep we possess no power over our frame, no capacity for exertion, so must it be when we are dead. When our eyes are closed in sleep, our strength, our reflection, our influence, are gone; All things around us become indifferent: thus will it be when we have reached the grave. All that now charms, all that we now deem important, will thus be coveted and regarded no more.

But between the sleep of life and that of death, one important difference may be remarked. Whether, when we lie down at night, we shall ever again rise from our beds, may be a matter of doubt; that we shall rise again from the grave, is certain. Viewed in this light, with our fondness for life, in the former case there is more real cause for apprehension than in the latter, though we are accustomed to think differently. We ought, however, not to undervalue sleep. It is the medium through which God, in his goodness, is pleased to remind us, from day to day, that we must die. May we, as we advance to the consummation of our destiny, bear that constantly in mind, that at all times we may keep our house "set in order," constantly looking forward to the attainment, through the favouring bounty of our gracious Creator, of benefits more dazzling and superb than are to be found in this world; bene

fits which will endure for ever. It must be our care to remain constantly awake to the unequalled importance of giving our thoughts to things like these. May we, by earnest prayer, and a faithful discharge of the various duties which devolve upon us, secure for ourselves, hereafter, blessed repose in the bright abode of our heavenly Father!

THE SOUL CLEANSED FROM SIN BY THE BLOOD OF OUR SAVIOUR.

The atonement of Christ is one of the chief glories, and most surprising wonders of my religion: it is the ground of my hope, it is the very life of my soul. Here I have been learning the several transactions of the great God, the Creator and ruler of the world, with all the children of men from the beginning of the creation. The light of nature informs me in an imperfect manner, and the Scripture with much brighter evidence assures me, that I was made under the law, and not born to live at random, according to the wild dictates of appetite and passion. I am informed also, my Creator has guarded the honour of his law with indignation and wrath, with pain of the flesh, and anguish of the mind, and death itself, as the penalties to be inflicted on those that break it. A law divinely wise and righteous, and a sanction of solemn and divine

But, alas! I am one of the sinful, guilty race of man.-My very nature is corrupt, my powers of action are unholy, and I have broken the law of my God in a thousand instances. My conscience condemns me, my mouth is stopped, I am guilty before God. I lie under the sentence of his condemning law by nature, and am by nature a child of disobedience, and a child of wrath. It is a glorious instance of divine mercy and forbearance, that he has not executed the severities of his law upon me long ago: it is rich mercy and adorable patience that my flesh and spirit have not been filled with all these terrors, that I am not made as wretched as I have been rebellious.

Nor can I expect that the great and terrible God, who sent his indignation upon angels when they sinned, turned them out of heaven, and chained them in darkness, should forgive all my infinite offences, without some reparation made for the honour of his broken law. He is a great God indeed, his majesty is tremendous, and every thing that belongs to him

must have its due of honour.

If I labour with all my powers to make some recompence for my past iniquities by new obedience, I find it is impossi-ble. The best of my righteousnesses are all defective; my holiest services want some forgiveness, as well as my wilful sins. Nor can I suffer the punishment due to my iniquities, without being for ever miserable. All the doors of hope are shut against me, nor by the utmost effort and labour of my own powers, can I find a way to escape: if I am left to myself in this state, I must despair and perish. But blessed, for ever blessed be the mercy of my God, that he has sent his own Son to take flesh and blood upon him. He has sent him in the likeness of sinful flesh to become a sacrifice for sin, to sustain the sorrows which I could never sustain, and to provide a laver of his own blood to cleanse us from all sins. Lord, I humbly approach this sacred laver, to wash away the defilements of my soul.

### MORNING .- FEBRUARY 27.

LOVE FOR CHRIST IMPLORED

O for a heart to love my God; A heart from sin set free; A heart that always feels the blood So freely shed for me!

A heart resigned, submissive, meek, My dear Redeemer's throne; Where only Christ is heard to speak, Where Jesus reigns alone.

A lowly and believing heart, Abhorring self and sin: A constant heart which nought can part From Christ who dwells within.

A child-like heart, that cries for food, And pines for love divine;

An upright heart by grace renew'd, Rippon's Collection. A copy Lord of thine.

THE WORD OF GOD PREACHING PEACE. ACTS X.

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine

alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded

thee of God. 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I

perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh

righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached:

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem: whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and showed him

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before

of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of 44 ¶ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost

fell on all them which heard the word.

GOD'S CHIEF COMMANDMENT, LOVE.

It was the love and compassion which Jesus felt for man, misguided sinful man, that disposed him to subject himself to the pains of mortal life, and the horrors of a shameful death. He was distressed at beholding the woe and hopeless condition of the human race, and with God-like pity, took all the weight of their misdeeds upon himself, that they might be restored to the favour of his eternal Father. No greater evidence could be required of his This he retained even in those moments when he was most outraged, and when with all the weakness of humanity about him, his sufferings must have been the most excruciating; yet even then, the brutal scoffers who mocked him, and the pitiless savages who tortured him, were the objects of his compassion. How sublime the greatness of that benevolence, which, even in death, could pray for the foes who exulted in his misery! Yet thus did he, by such an example, impress upon his faithful followers the important precept which he had given them in other days, "Pray for them that persecute and revile vou."

Ought those who deem themselves Christians, and who hope to be saved by the sufferings of a Redeemer, to forget this, and seek to return evil for evil? We must repress angry feelings, which would lead us to thirst for vengeance. To the natural man revenge is sweet, but not so to the heart that is purified by religion. The conscience of the Christian would be disturbed by such a course, and he would feel that he forfeited his claim to mercy from God, who knew not how to shew forgiveness to man. From this time forward, it shall be our anxious care to resemble him who went about doing good to all the afflicted. him, let us endeavour to shew ourselves generous. forbearing, and too high-minded to avenge ourselves on an offending brother. Confirm us in this resolve, O Lord! and let the image of a crucified Saviour be constantly before our eyes! However we are offended, however we may be moved to anger, we will remain stedfast and unmoved, and serenely submit to unprovoked insult from the wicked. For those offences which most grieve our hearts, our appeal shall be made to the Judge of all the earth, who in his wisdom will deal in his own good time with each of the sons of men according to his deserts. To bless them that curse us, to render good for evil, will be to imitate the conduct of our Redeemer, and then we may hope, and not in vain, that God will protect us from danger, console us for pain, and grant us his blessing.

Should we weakly entertain mean and revengeful feelings, we must sink even in our own estimation; and little should we deserve to be ransomed at such a price as Christ paid for us. The seraphs who surround the throne of the Eternal, must, while hymning his praise, regard with horror mortals who could so madly act against the precepts of their Saviour, and the spirits of good men who glorify the benevolence of the Almighty. and the love of Jesus Christ, could, if we indulge a wild passion for revenge, have nothing in common with us. Let us not make so unworthy a return, for a mercy like that which we have to acknowledge. However incapable we may feel of duly celebrating thy name, O Lord! let us most zealously strive to render honour to thee, the great Author of all! To thy chief commandment we will render reverential obedience—the commandment of love. By attempting to copy thy goodness and forbearance, we shall best testify our sense of that benevolence to which we owe everything. So shall we be cheered by the blissful hope that in that great day, when our Lord comes to seek his true worshippers, he may deem us to be of the number, and admit us to fellowship with him in heaven.

### THE CHRIST THE JUDGE.

He is exalted to "the right-hand of God, where there are pleasures for evermore." His holy soul, which once endured such terrible conflicts and agonies, now sits triumphant in eternal peace, never to be ruffled and disquieted again. He now enjoys those sweet and sacred satisfaction of heart, which arise from the review of his own finished labours and sufferings; tiresome labours indeed, and tremendous sufferings, but never more to be repeated! He is now for ever drinking in fuller pleasures from the indwelling god-head, from the smiles of his Father's face, and shall never more complain, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame;" and these are the joys which he is now possessed of as a just and divine recompence.

He has authority given him by the Father to govern the world as long as it stands, and to judge it at the last day. "He is exalted to be both a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to men, and forgiveness of sins." He calls those who are given him out of the world, and makes them parts of his church. He changes their sinful natures, he makes them the children of God, and pardons all their iniquities. Nor doth his kingdom reach only to his own church, who are his willing and joyful subjects, but it extends over the whole world; the rebellious and infidel nations are under his reign and controul. His lordship not only includes all mankind, but it reaches over angels and devils, over all the regions and the inhabitants of heaven, earth, and hell: "All things are put into his hands, and placed under his dominion; he is Lord of all." He doth not reign only in Sion as here-

tofore, and as King of the Jewish nation, but "the heathen" are now made his inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth his possession." Not only his own followers and friends are under his government, but every creature is made subject to him: "His people are his willing subjects in this day of his power, and his enemies shall be made his footstool. Angels, principalities and powers, are put under him as his ministering servants," for the purposes of his government over

the church and the world.

And yet further; he is not only the appointed Heir and Lord of all, but he is constituted the final Judge of the living and the dead: He who stood once at the bar of Pilate and the high-priest as a transgressor, hath a throne of judgment preparing for him, and the high-priests and Pilate shall be arraigned there: All the tribes of the earth shall be gathered before him, and shall receive their eternal sentence from his mouth. "God the Father hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, and has given assurance of it to all men, by raising him from the dead." "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment into the hands of his Son, he hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man."

### EVENING .- FEBRUARY 27.

GOD'S WONDERS-MAN'S DIGNITY.

O thou, to whom all creatures bow Within this earthly frame. Through all the world how great art thou! How glorious is thy name!

When heaven, thy beauteous work on high, Employs my wond'ring sight; The moon that nightly rules the sky, With stars of feebler light.

What's man (say I), that, Lord, thou lov'st To keep him in thy mind? Or what his offspring, that thou prov'st To them so wondrous kind?

Him next in power thou didst create To thy celestial train; Ordained with dignity and state, O'er all thy works to reign.

O thou, to whom all creatures bow Within this earthly frame, Through all the world how great art thou! How glorious is thy name!

Dr. Miller.

### PSALM CVII.

31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness. and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

32 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water

springs into dry ground;
34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water springs.

36 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation ; 37 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may

yield fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low through

oppression, affliction, and sorrow, 40 He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them

to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.

41 Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.

42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

43 Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the LORD.

### TEARS NOT TO BE IDLY SHED.

"I remembered God when I was troubled, and complained when my spirit was overburdened." Than such feelings, nothing is more in accordance with the ordinary course of human nature; yet than these nothing is more fitting and salutary. To the goodness of God himself, we owe the alleviating sigh, the soothing tear. These are given to us, in some degree to relieve the oppressed heart, that we may not sink beneath the anguish we experience, and these, sad as they are, viewed as indications of sorrow, in some degree diminish its weight, even before we can shape our thoughts in speech. While we recognise here the bounty of the Creator, the weakness and folly of our own hearts are not less apparent, for too often are these sighs and tears breathed in reference to imaginary woes, for the loss of trivial objects, beneath the care of an immortal being, awake to the importance of his future destiny, and which, if not regarded with indifference, ought never to have become the subjects of bitter regret. In such circumstances we stand condemned by our tears, and our foolish sighs accuse us before the throne of our Maker. Were we but properly sustained by faith, moderate ills would be borne with dignified fortitude. We should learn to reflect, that he who counts the days which are, and those which are to come, will count up for us our losses and gains. He counts all our tears from the moments when our mothers kiss those of infancy from our eyes, even to the last which will fall from them when we are in the agonies of death. He will not lose sight of them: therefore let our souls be comforted.

But this applies only to those which are extorted from our nature by circumstances we cannot control, and not to those which spring

from folly, avarice, or unworthy impatience. For such as we shed without cause, we ought to feel confounded with shame. The treasure which mercy bestowed upon man, to solace the mind borne down by adversity, ought not to be squandered-thrown away in connexion with trifling disappointments. We ought not to be for ever mourning for the treasures of the world; our thoughts should be fixed on the higher glories that await us as the reward of a well-spent life, and we must not allow sensibility to degenerate into cowardice. It becomes us, in all ordinary occasions of grief, to dry our tears, sustained and cheered by the assurance that God, in his own good time, will wipe them from every

Reflect, the affliction which it is thine to know, painful as it may be at the moment, is not the work of blind chance, as a pusillanimous nature may suggest, but it is sent for our ultimate good. Our hard-hearted brethren who persecute us, can draw no tears from our straining eyes, of which the great Judge of the universe will not take account. Safe in his hands, they will accumulate for us a treasure, in which we shall rejoice hereafter. Knowing this, ought we for a moment to be fainthearted? On his cross of agony, Jesus, the Saviour of man, offered tears and prayers, as a sacrifice for those he came to redeem. Let us mix our tears with them; but at the same time, let us say to the Most High, "Deign to forgive us, Oh Father! for that we frequently, in our weakness, abandon ourselves to weeping, we scarcely know why; and let us not throw away tears, thy precious gift, for trifles unworthy of a Christian's serious thought." May God give us resolution to guard against this vain despondency, which too often indicates a proneness to sin; but let us shed such tears as fell from the remorsestricken Peter's eyes, when he, forgetful of duty, had denied his Lord; or tears of joy when we recognise the blessings and the mercies which the Supreme Being bestows upon us, his favourite creation. In such cases, let tears bedew our eyes repeatedly, far oftener than they have hitherto done. Let us, too, shed tears of sympathy with our fellows, let us weep with the sorrowful, and when we suffer under really severe distress; but still looking up, with assured hope, to him who has promised that he will never forsake his faithful worshippers, even in our grief let us cherish hope.

dence we desire that our hearts may be fortified against fretful repinings, if, for wise purposes, thy assistance should, for a time, be delayed. He wants faith in thee, who seeks to prescribe the course which thou shouldst pursue, and who, in his sadness, would presume to argue against thy decision.

The night in gloomy majesty advances. At this still hour, fewer tears are flowing than fell in the glare and bustle of the day, which has closed, but those few are perhaps more bitter than all the rest. They may be drawn from eyes which gentle sleep refuses to close, from those whose misery is great. Deign, Oh merciful Father! to comfort our mourning fellow-creatures. Preferring this prayer, we feel how happy is our lot that we are spared such extremities. Even in this long and dreary winter's night, our comforts are not sensibly abated. Whywhy then do we find it difficult to weep from gratitude?

### GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF IN PAST TIMES TO THE RIGHTEOUS.

God visibly conversed with Adam and his family, so also with several of the patriarchs. He was seen often by them, especially such of them as were most eminent for holiness in a degenerate age, and conversed familiarly with them in a visible manner: And thence probably came the phrase, "Enoch walked with God," and "Noah walked with God," which, in process of time, became a common phrase to signify a pious man, who conversed much with God in a spiritual manner, though those visible appearances were not then vouchsafed to him.

When God had chosen Abraham to be his peculiar favourite, he appeared to him frequently; "The God of glory appeared to our Father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia-and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country," &c. And when he came into the land of Canaan, "The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him;" or, as the Hebrew express it, "who was seen by him." These seem to be visible appearances surrounded with light or glory, and therefore it is said, the God of glory appeared to him.

After these things, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward: and Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" &c. Here was a vision, and here was a voice; the person that appeared was the Lord God, or Jehovah, "Elohim;" and yet it is said, "The word of the Lord came to him in a vision;" probably this signifies Jesus Christ, the "Logos," or word of God. And yet, he assumes the name of Jehovah: "I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees;" and further, "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces of the divided sacrifice," in token of God's making covenant with Abraham; as it follows, "In that same day Reposing on thy goodness, in perfect confi- the Lord, or Jehovah, made a covenant with Abram."

"The angel of the Lord" found Hagar in the wilderness, and said unto her, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly;" and though he be called "the angel of the Lord," in four places of this narrative, yet, "She called the name of the Lord or Jehovah, that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." The person who appeared, therefore, seems to be one who was an "angel of the Lord," and was also the Lord or Jehovah.

"When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord, or Jehovah, appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.—And Abram fell on his face: And God talked with him, saying—Behold, my covenant is with thee, &c., to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, &c., and I will be their God." Here is another dialogue; and "God said unto Abram—and Abram said unto God, and he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abram:" that is, the visible appearance

ascended out of Abraham's sight.

"And the Lord, Jehovah, appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day, and he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood before him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground; and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight. pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant." His first address was made to one of the three, who seemed to bear superior glory; afterward he invites them all to eat: "And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them? and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. And he said-Sarah thy wife shall have a son:" at which tidings, when Sarah laughed within herself, "the Lord, or Jehovah, said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is any thing too hard for the Lord, or Jehovah?

Watts.

### MORNING.—FEBRUARY 28.

SPARED BY MERCY.

The Lord of earth and sky,
The God of ages praise,
Who reigns enthroned on high,
Ancient of endless days!
Who lengthens out our trial here,
And spares us yet another year!

Barren and withered trees,
We cumbered long the ground;
No fruit of holiness
On our dead souls was found;
Yet did he us in mercy spare
Another, and another year.

When Justice bared the sword,
To cut the fig-tree down,
The pity of our Lord
Cried—" Let it still alone;"
The Father mild, inclined his ear,
And spared us yet another year.

Jesus, thy speaking blood,
From God obtained the grace,
Who therefore hath bestowed
On us a longer space:
Thou didst in our behalf appear,
And lo we see another year!

Then dig about our root,
Break up our fallow ground,
And let our gracious fruit
To thy great praise abound:
O let us all thy praise declare,
And fruit unto perfection bear.

Burder's Collection.

### PSALM CIII.

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his

benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities? who healeth all thy diseases:

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindness, and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfies the mouth with good things; so that thy

youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for

all that are oppressed.
7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the

children of Israel.

8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded

us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the

field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the

place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto

children's children;

 $18\,$  To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

### ATTEND TO THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE.

How sternly must that monitor, established by the Almighty in the human heart, reprove us as we approach the close of life, if dwelling in a Christian land, and in an age of refinement, rich in cultivated intellect. We obstinately neglect the manifold aids and appliances placed within our reach for saving ourselves from the wrath of God. What must be our feelings when, through such culpable neglect, we find that we are sinking to hopeless perdition! Our Creator has mercifully done every thing necessary to carry us triumphantly through worldly strife and worldly temptation, and yet we weakly, wickedly, refuse

salvation. He proffers us everlasting felicity, and we act as if endless misery were our choice.

Let us turn our eyes to Mount Calvary. All that he who was despised of men suffered on that awful ground, had for its glorious object the expiation of man's guilt. Yet we have acted as if it were our ambition to render the sacrifice unavailing; we care not to have the curse removed, and we spurn the blessing which woos

our acceptance.

Shall it ever be thus? When God would work our regeneration, cold and unfeeling, shall we reject a state of blissful freedom, to secure to ourselves the slavery of hell? Such, memory with bitterness reminds us, would seem to have been our choice. We have blindly coveted evil rather than good; and shame and sorrow, if true penitence come not to our aid, must be our portion through eternity. The reproaches that we must for ever breathe upon ourselves will vindicate the decrees of God. The blood of the Saviour shed for us in vain will heap coals of fire on the heads of the wretched sinners, and even the knowledge that, by his divine benevolence, they were ransomed and liberated from the thraldom of sin, will but mock them, and prove a fruitless, unavailing, source of sorrow and remorse.

While yet we survive, while the lamp holds out to burn, as the blessed hope remains to us, founded on the god-like assurance that the author of our being would rather that the sinner should repent and live, we will still endeavour to profit from what our Saviour has done for the benefit of man. Should it now be the will of our eternal Father at once to call us away, with reverent humility we must feel constrained to acknowledge that nothing had been left undone by him that might enable us to aspire to a glorious immortality, but with deep reflection must we feel that our ungrateful hearts have turned contemptuously from the proffered boon. Awful then as the dread sentence of an offended Deity must be, we could do no other than confess it were most just.

Almighty parent, whose mercy is unbounded, whose forbearing patience cannot be limited, be graciously pleased to overlook our countless deficiencies, and yet grant to us in this life a period for solemn reflection, that past negligence and stubbornness may be corrected, and in some degree atoned for. Our sins, against thee and our Saviour, as they are in our own eyes most hateful, so are they sincerely deplored. The retrospect fills our hearts with unspeakable an-

guish. Oh! grant that we may be permitted to regain a tranquil state of mind, and a lively hope of heaven, through the sufferings which the Saviour of man endured. Sustain our troubled spirits, that we may not sink under the rebukes of our own consciences; guide us into the right way, and let the weary and disconsolate spirit at last find repose.

If, up to this period, the labours of Christ have been lightly regarded, if his holy words have been seldom remembered, if his sacred precepts have not worked in us a thorough amendment, enable us now, at length, to change our course, so that from day to day we may be found carefully seeking the welfare of our souls, humbly prostrate before our God, anxious only to spend our time wisely and well, that we may gain thy approving smile, and be numbered among those whom Jesus has redeemed. That blessing, incomparably surpassing in value even all thy other glorious gifts, redemption by Jesus Christ, we devoutly implore. Turn not away from our suit, Oh gracious Father! Even in that solemn hour, when the awakened conscience is most justly terrified with the enormity of its offences, and when the grave is about to receive us, and thy fearful judgment suggests itself in the most appalling shape, then look down upon us with pity. Aid and sustain us, Oh Saviour of man! and grant that we may at length serenely pay the debt of nature; and, assured of thy mercy, pass joyously from this state of being to join the heirs of immortality.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT.

When the rays of the sun fall on the surface of a material object, part of those rays are absorbed: part of them are reflected back, in strait lines; and part of them refracted, this way and that, in various directions. When the Holy Ghost shines upon our souls, part of the grace he inspires is absorbed, to our own particular comfort; part of it reflected back in acts of love and joy and prayer and praise; and part of it refracted every way, in acts of benevolence, beneficence, and all moral and social duty.

The most correct and lively description of the sun cannot convey either the light, the warmth, the cheerfulness, or the fruitfulness, which the actual shining of that luminary conveys: neither can the most laboured and accurate dissertations on grace and spiritual things, impart a true idea of them, without an experience of the Holy Spirit's work on the heart.

In vain do the inhabitants of London go to their conduits for supply, unless the man who has the master-key turns the water on. And in vain do we seek to quench our thirst at ordinances, unless God communicates the living water of his

Scripture can be savingly understood, only in and by the inward illumination of the Holy Ghost. The gospel is a picture of God's free grace to sinners.

Were we in a room, hung with the finest paintings, and

adorned with the most exquisite statues, we could not see one of them, if all light was excluded. Now, the blessed Spirit's irradiation is the same to the mind, that outward light is to

the bodily eyes.

As the sails of a ship carry it into the harbour, so prayer carries us to the throne and bosom of God. But as the sails cannot, of themselves, speed the progress of a vessel, unless filled with a favourable breeze; so the Holy Spirit must breathe upon our hearts, or our prayers will be motionless and lifeless.

An excellent divine of the last century, Mr. Thomas Cole, compared "the Scriptures to a seal, and the heart of man to wax." I would add, that the Holy Ghost is the fire that warms, and penetrates, and softens the wax, in order to its becoming susceptible of impression.

Toplady.

### EVENING .-FEBRUARY 28.

THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH.

Joy is a fruit that will not grow
In nature's barren soil;
All we can boast, till Christ we know,
Is vanity and toil.

But, where the Lord has planted grace, And made his glories known, There fruits of heavenly joy and peace Are found, and there alone.

A bleeding Saviour, seen by faith— A sense of pardoning love— A hope that triumphs over death, Give joys like those above.

To take a glimpse within the vail— To know that God is mine, Are springs of joy that never fail, Unspeakably divine!

These are the joys that satisfy,
And sanctify the mind;
Which make the spirit mount on high,
And leave the world behind.

No more, believers, mourn your lot; But if you are the Lord's, Resign to them that know him not, Such joys as earth affords.

Newton.

THE MINISTER'S OBJECT AND REWARD. 1 COR. CHAP. IX.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach

the gospel should live of the gospel.

15 But I have used none of these

15 But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorifying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed

ato me

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made my-

self servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I

might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I ought by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be

partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly: so fight I, not as

one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

### THE MOON AN EVIDENCE OF GOD'S GOODNESS.

"Who is she that looketh forth, fair as the moon?" So spake Solomon in the song handed down to us; and fair indeed is the great luminary of night. A feeling of sacred joy is proved by the heart capable of solemn meditation. When we gaze on the starry heavens, and admire the works of God in the mild and magic light which the soft lustre of the moon sheds over the smiling With what provident kindness has the Creator modified the darkness, and lessened the dangers of the night, by commanding the moon to throw her light on our darkened planet. Her gentle rays carry peace to the inmost recesses of our souls, and the sight of this glorious sphere wakes admiration, and teaches mortals to adore that great Being whose glory is thus silently These feelings are heightened, if proclaimed. we take into consideration the wonderful influence which the moon has on our globe, causing, as it does, the rising and falling of the tides. The view of this magnificent object ought to be full of instruction to the admiring beholder. It is a monitor, commissioned to remind us how months and years successively pass away, and also how soon man himself, while the moon continues

to shine with unfailing lustre, must reach the close of his earthly career. The admonition thus supplied, of the fleetness of time, and of the certainty of human decay, should stimulate the mind to those exercises suitable to our present condition, and most conducive to our future welfare. They strengthen the feeble heart. and teach us to reflect on immortality. Withdrawn from such themes, the frivolous cares of the world intrude upon us, with all their accompanying follies, vices, and perils. In the absence of pious meditation, there is no substantial enjoyment in life, no peace of mind; and as we advance towards old age, our departed years carry bitterness to the heart. Let us endeavour, with purity of thought, constantly and sedately to read the lesson which nature teaches; let every new appearance of the moon convey to our minds a solemn exhortation, wisely to employ the limited period assigned to us on earth, by faithfully devoting it to truth, humanity, and heaven.

The orb which so benignly continues, from age to age, to illuminate the world, should inspire courage, should impart firmness to our minds, in the darker and more difficult paths of our terrestrial peregrinations. As we see the moonbeams sublimely burst through threatening clouds, brighten the path of the fainting wanderer, and instantly dissipate his apprehensions, so, we ought to remember, comfort has, in many instances, burst upon us, after we had long wandered in cheerless gloom. Divine Providence has shone forth from scenes of darkness and dismay, which had filled us with wild alarm and sorrow; and those circumstances which we most deplored, have proved the source of countless blessings and continual comfort. If we feel this, we shall enjoy peace of mind, springing from a just confidence in an almighty and all merciful Parent, whose glory in the heavens manifests his care for man, through all the wonderful changes of nature; the great Being, "who maketh his sun and his moon shine on the evil and the good. and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.

Reminded, by the glorious light above, of the vanishing periods of our existence, it is a subject of serious calculation, how many months have we already seen, and for how many dare we venture to look forward? Oh gracious Lord! seated above the heavens, thou alone canst know the number of our days. To us, weak and blind as we are, they are necessarily unknown. While with lively admiration we contemplate the won-

derful works of thy hand, still the feeling we have is, may sun and moon lose their light, or may our earthly being speedily terminate, so we can be assured that we are thine. If ours is the happiness to gain thy favour, if we are thine, and only thine, for us a higher, brighter, never-setting sun will rise, after the evening of our present life has passed away; and we can joyfully leave a world under whose moon, to those who give themselves up to the vanities of the world, there is little to be proved, but toil, disappointment, and misery.

### THE TENDER COMPASSION OF CHRIST.

We often know and see the afflictions and infirmities of one another, without our knowledge producing any effect upon our minds; but it is not so with Christ. Our infirmities interest his feelings, and touch his soul,—and this not in a slight degree: his sympathy is a strong sympathy. When a good man sees another in distress or misery, though he is a stranger, he is moved with compassion toward him: but if the sufferer, instead of being a stranger, is a beloved relative or friend, he feels a much livelier interest in his sorrow, and is more deeply affected with his condition. Thus Jesus feels for us, not merely as we are objects of pity, but as the objects of his tenderest love. He feels for us as his own beloved people, as those whom he has purchased with his blood, and whom he regards as the choicest treasures he possesses. He feels for his people as a brother feels for his brethren, as a father for his child, as a husband for the wife of his bosom.

The sympathy of Christ is as constant and perpetual too, as it is strong. He does not have pity upon us one hour, and neglect us the next; he does not weep with us in this trial, and turn away from us in that: no; he shares every sorrow with us, and as long as we are encompassed with infirmities, so long will his compassion be exercised towards us. Nay more; he will sympathise with us, when all our infirmities shall have passed away; he will share in our joys in heaven, as well as in our sorrows upon earth. Even in his kingdom above, whatever affects us will affect him. He now mourns with us in our sorrow, and he will there sing with us in our joy.

To be touched with a feeling of our infirmities implies, further, a readiness in Christ to succour us under them. The sympathy of Christ is not a mere sentimental thing; it is not that fashionable and much applauded sensibility, which can weep over misery, and yet not stretch out a hand to relieve it. It is an active principle. It leads the Saviour to do for us all that, consistently with our welfare and his glory, he can do; to give us all the help, and support, and comfort, that we need under our afflictions, and, as soon as possible, to give us a happy issue out of them. He is indeed a wise, as well as a tender friend; and he will not remove any infirmity from us one moment before it would be well for us to have it removed; but then as long as we are afflicted, he is afflicted; while we are suffering, he is suffering also. Let this satisfy us; let it bring comfort to our souls under affliction; and convince us that help and deliverance will come in their proper season.

Rev. C. Bradley.

### MORNING.-FEBRUARY 29.

(Leap Year.)

FRAR CONQUERED BY CONFIDENCE IN THE SAVIOUR.

Beset with snares on every hand, In life's uncertain path I stand: Saviour divine! diffuse thy light, To guide my doubtful footsteps right.

Engage this roving treacherous heart, Great God! to choose the better part; To scorn the trifles of a day, For joys that none can take away.

Then let the wildest storms arise, Let tempests mingle earth and skies; No fatal shipwreck shall I fear, But all my treasures with me bear.

If thou, my Jesus, still art nigh, Cheerful I live, and cheerful die; Secure when mortal comforts flee, To find ten thousand worlds in thee.

Golden Treasury.

FLY FROM THE ABODE OF SIN. JEREMIAH, CHAP. LI.

6 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity: for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recomnense.

7 Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her

wine: therefore the nations are mad.

8 Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her;

take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.

10 The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God.

11 Make bright the arrows; gather the shields; the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple.

12 Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes: for the Lord hath both devised and done that which he spake

against the inhabitants of Babylon.

13 O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetuousness.

14 The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.

15 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the

heaven by his understanding.

16 When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

17 Every man is brutish by his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is

falsehood, and there is no breath in them.

18 They are vanity, the work of errors; in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

42 The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

43 Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

44 And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea the wall of Babylon shall fall.

45 My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord.

46 And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; and a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler.

47 Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the

midst of her.

48 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the Lord.

### ALL THINGS WORK FOR OUR GOOD.

"Lo! all these things worketh God twice or three times with man."

This date, which occurs but once in four years. many human beings live but to see twice or thrice. Many even see it not so often, but under favourable circumstances scarcely any, while in the full possession of their faculties, witness its sixteenth return. I shall make use of the last hours of this day of rare occurrence, as fifteen hundred days must elapse, if I shall be spared so long, before I can look upon it again. When it next returns, who that now lives can say whether or not I shall be capable of grave meditation? It is a remarkable day, it is a surplus, an addition made to the years of my life. What is the cause? It is explained by nothing less than the unalterable laws framed by eternal wisdom to which God has subjected nature; by nothing less than that wonderful order, which, wherever we turn our eyes, proclaims to us the all-important truth that God is the wise and mighty ruler of the universe-its legislator and preserver. How consoling is this to the mind awake to devotional feeling in the midst of the confusion and disorder, the sorrow and destruction which we behold in connexion with a troubled world and the perplexed concerns of mankind; how eminently calculated is it to elevate our thoughts, to inspire holy confidence and sacred hope! The Lord of all, who announces himself in the wise and immutable laws which govern our system, is our Master and our Father; our lives are in his hands, and as in the progress of the heavenly bodies through the

celestial space, all is accomplished without the slightest deviation from the destined track, so every vicissitude which marks the onward stream of our existence takes place under his government; and neither happiness nor fear, neither joy nor suffering, can be experienced, but when such is the eternal will. We should, therefore, direct our attention with care incessantly to study the works of God, and endeavour, by every means within our reach, to strengthen our faith, enlarge our hope, and increase our love of the Omnipotent by the contemplation of those wise decrees which nature, in all her changes, submissively obeys. So we do this our hearts will be calm, and we shall never feel wanting in joyful courage. Animated by the conviction that a wise and Almighty Deity governs this globe, and all it contains, our firmness will not be shaken by the sharpest sufferings that may assail. We shall still, from time to time, reflect that in his book all days are written which are vet to come. Should it be ordained that many evils befall us from the course of events, and the circumstances we are forced to encounter, the very evils deplored, we may be assured, will prove sources of future comfort. The events we witness are not sent without an object; they are intended eventually to benefit man, and tend to the welfare of the animated creation. We, therefore, must never repine at the fatigue, the toil, and the gloom which are the companions of winter. These all have their use to prepare for the renewal of the genial spring and the glorious summer. We will then never cease to praise the bounty of our Lord, and joyfully to celebrate his glory.

Such are the reflections inspired by the return of this particular day. Possibly we shall never see it again; but, should we be permitted to survive till another leap-year returns, it will be after we have taken many more toilsome steps on life's dreary road, but doubtless it will also be after we have received many more of the innumerable blessings which God, in his goodness, bestows upon his creatures. Assured of this, Oh may it find us more prudent, more devoted to all that is good, than we can flatter ourselves we have been up to this day, and more closely united to our Saviour Jesus Christ. Such is the humble, the ardent, the sincere wish we now breathe. Gracious Redeemer, in the turmoil of life let not its vain cares cause it to be forgotten. In thy infinite goodness, vouchsafe to remind us of it from time to time, that when levity and frivolity are

likely to prevail, we may still be preserved faithful to thee, till, sustained by thy mercy, we reach that point where Time's changes are no more, and where eternity begins.

### VAIN ALARMS OF THE REPENTANT SINNER.

There are two things among many that Satan useth to roar out after them that are coming to Jesus Christ; 1. That they are not elected; 2. That they have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To both these I answer briefly,

First, Touching election, out of which thou fearest thou art excluded. Why coming sinner, even the text itself afforded thee help against this doubt, and that by a double argument:

First, That coming to Christ is by virtue of the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father; but thou art coming; therefore God hath given thee, promised thee, and is drawing thee to Jesus Christ. Coming sinner, hold to this; and when Satan beginneth to roar again, answer, But I feel my heart moving after Jesus Christ; but that would not be, if it were not given by promise, and drawing to Christ by the power of the Father.

Secondly, Jesus Christ hath promised, "that him that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out:" and if he hath said it, will he not make it good, I mean even thy salvation? For as I have said already, not to cast out, is to receive and admit to the benefit of salvation. If then the Father hath given thee, as is manifest by thy coming; and if Christ will receive thee, thou coming soul, as it is plain he will, because he hath said, "He will in no wise cast out:" then be confident, and let these conclusions, that as naturally flow from the text, as light from the sun, or water from the fountain stay thee.

If Satan therefore objecteth, But thou art not elected; answer, But I am coming, Satan, I am coming; and that I would not be, but that the Father draws me: and I am coming to such a Lord Jesus, as will in no wise cast me out. Further, Satan, were I not elect, the Father would not draw me, nor would the Son so graciously open his bosom to me. I am persuaded, that not one of the non-elect shall ever be able to say, no, not in the day of judgment, I did sincerely come to Jesus Christ. Come they may, feignedly, as Judas and Simon Magus did: but that is not our question. Therefore, O thou honest-hearted coming sinner, be not afraid, but come!

### EVENING.—FEBRUARY 29.

GOD EVER TO BE ADORED.

Through all the changing scenes of life, In trouble and in joy, The praises of my God shall still My heart and tongue employ.

Of his deliverance I will boast, Till all that are distressed, From my example comfort take, And charm their griefs to rest.

O magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt his name:
When in distress to him I called,
He to my succour came.

Burford.

## NOTHING CAN SEPARATE THE CREATURE FROM GOD. ROMANS VIII.

28 We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the

first-born among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be

for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

It is God that justifieth.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness

or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors

through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come.

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ

Jesus our Lord.

### THE SOUL SHARES NOT THE BODY'S DOOM.

A churchyard is a solemn place,
And solemn thoughts will rise,
While gazing on the narrow space
That holds such mysteries,
As those that lie for ever hid
Beneath the cool green sod and heavy coffin-lid.

Not the fast changing of the clay!
This is no mystery!
We all have seen how soon decay
Can steal the hues of life away;
When man lies down to die,
The glory of the flesh, we know, is o'er,

And worms destroy the form that we behold no more.

Looking upon the grave, in thought we trace,
The hidden things below,
Corruption stealing o'er the upturned face,
Staining the marble brow;
The dimness gathering in the golden hair,
The horror and the gloom where all was once so fair.

All know the body's doom,
But the immortal soul!
It doth not, 'mid this horror and this gloom,
Find final goal.
That flame, whose essence is of heavenly birth,
Think not it shares with dust the common lot of earth!

But whither doth it flee?

Doth it from that sad parting strife,
Summoned by God's decree,
At once spring upwards—bright and free—
Into Eternal Life?
Or sink for ever to that deeper grave,
From whose undying pangs no second death shall save?

Is there some midway land,
Where souls that quit the clay
Linger—a dim and solemn band—
Until the judgment day;
Waiting in trembling hope or fear,

For that dread trump to sound which all that live must

The poet's dreamy lore
Tells of pale midnight ghosts,
Or throngs some visionary shore
With the grave's silent hosts;
Or fills the churchyard's dreary bound
With flitting shades of those who, buried, lie around.

Sad fancies!—wild and vain!
Nor yet the Sage's thought,
(That doth such idle dreams disdain)
Than the poor Poet's misty brain,
Is more with truth in-wrought;
For whence we come, and whither we shall go,
Alike the wise and weak have vainly sought to know.

But—sure of our reward—
Walking by Faith—secure—
Let us believe His word,
Which ever doth endure;
And He hath said, "Yet but a little space,
Ye in my Father's house shall see me face to face."

# SEEK CONVERSE WITH THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HOPE FROM ABOVE.

It is the part of wisdom to learn not to overrate the value of those objects which may be presented to the mortal eye. This life is the gift of God, and not, therefore, to be despised, but we should regard it as a low or early state of being, never intended by him for the final destiny of the human race. It is a world which is filled with many cares, and many temptations, designed as trials for the student spirit; as exercises for patience and resignation. It should be our aim to embrace a course of discipline here, which may eventually fit us for association with beings of a higher order, elsewhere. To this we ought to apply ourselves, and that without loss of time. We know not how long we shall be permitted to remain in this world. God may call us suddenly away, and thus the opportunity of meditation and preparation will be lost. Let us then lose no time in shaping our course by a standard which reason and religion teach are likely to prove acceptable in his sight.

Deign, Oh Lord! in the midst of the thousand snares which surround, to save us from temptation, and deliver us from evil. We know that thine eye is upon us. Let the consciousness of this keep us constantly on the alert, and when sloth and negligence would intrude, rouse us from the dream with lively views of the invisible world, in order that we may improve the passing moment.

And grant, Oh God! when sinners would allure us to quit the right path in their society, that we may have firmness to refuse. Let holy converse with thee, give us a distaste for the words, and doings, and enjoyments of those who know thee not. Be it our care to seek those who honour the Lord, to walk with wise and holy men, to the end that we ourselves may gain wisdom and holiness. Quicken us, Oh Lord, and render us the happy instruments of kindling the divine flame of love in others. Let it go forward increasing and extending from heart to heart till thy kingdom shall come.

And enable us to repress a maddening thirst for sensual pleasures. Let us remember that such enjoyments lead to death. Refine our minds so that we may covet no soul-polluting, gross enjoyments, but grant that we may soberly and moderately avail ourselves of such pleasures not inconsistent with the dignity of a being of thy creation, as thy bounty may place within our reach.

Oh let us, in fulfilling our duty, find the noblest happiness. Let our souls rise on the wings of holy contemplation to thy glory, and let the influence of divine grace prepare us to mingle with the seraphim who are with thee above the sky, renouncing the mean joys which tempt the flesh, and endanger the everlasting peace of the

Teach us, in that station which we fill, worthily to discharge the duties which devolve upon us. Spare us the vain cares of life which would withdraw our meditation from thee, and our future destiny. Let us not meanly covet worldly possessions, but moderate our desires; and while others are seeking for gold, let us care only for riches with God.

Let no business, however important, make us forget that which concerns the soul. Let us not for a moment put the affairs of time in comparison with the interests of eternity. Grant this, Oh Lord, that we may pass through the world with our eyes fixed on heaven, and feeling thy influence stronger and stronger as we approach the end of our career, till that moment shall arrive when the

world and all its glittering objects shall fade from our view, and the glories of a higher state of being alone occupy our minds, and cheer us with thoughts that we shall soon be with thee, soon be received and acnowledged as thine for ever.

### MORNING.—MARCH 1.

### ALL FOR CHRIST.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be;
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own!

Let the world despise and leave me;
They have left my Saviour too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me—
Thou art not, like them, untrue;
And whilst thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends disown me;
Show thy face, and all is bright.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure,
Come disaster, scorn, and pain;
In thy service pain is pleasure,
With thy favour loss is gain.
I have called thee Abba, Father,
I have set my heart on thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

### THE REDEEMER BETRAYED AND CONDEMNED. MARK XIV.

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy.

34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, All things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

one nour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy;) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is

come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of

- 42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. 43 ¶ And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the
- 44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

53 ¶ And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed

himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against

him, saving,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him: and he said unto him, Art thou

the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? and they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

### HOW THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD WELCOME THE RETURN OF SPRING.

"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof." We may conclude a month with lighter hearts than we commence one, if we gloomily calculate how many perils may await us in the space of thirty days. The month of March is deemed one of danger, It is one in which many have to expiate by disease their thoughtless conduct during the preceding winter. Others, drawn forth by the early forerunners of spring, forget that the ground, though temporarily orightened by warm sunshine, remains damp and cold, and bodily suffering is the consequence. Too frequently it may be added, the lively impression made on our minds by the approach of the genial season, leads us to abandon ourselves to thoughtless enjoyment, instead of expressing

those feelings of gratitude to the giver of all good. which this blessing ought to inspire. We know, we feel that the Lord is gracious, and that we are undeserving of the countless benefits we receive at his hands. His faithful care, and unfailing bounty, cherish and rejoice us from year to year. object that glads our sense is calculated to teach an important lesson. The gay carol of the lark seems to say, "Man, art thou still spared-still living? come then, and join thy nobler song, the strain of rational gratitude, with our thoughtless lays, and thank thy kind preserver for all his favours." If we so interpret the music of nature, the response of our hearts should be, "We follow thee, unconscious messenger of God; we should feel shame could we remain cold and mute; and weak, heartless, and miserable must he be, who is not warmed by the first harbingers of spring, to devout gratitude and love of God. To such how poor, how joyless and dull must the late months of the year be found! He whose heart is not moved by the early song of the lark, can compose himself to sleep without heeding that of the nightingale. Let each of us say to those heralds of the summer, "No, my fellow-creatures, this must not be. It is only right that I should listen and admire. You have already performed a long journey to visit us, and ought not, after your lengthened absence to be received with coldness on your return." Spring will soon again be here. The curtain of the opening year being raised, how many beauteous objects will greet the delighted senses! Let us elevate our thoughts to contemplate their sublime author, and recognise in one and all the presence of our God and Father.

It is the part of wisdom in man, to keep his mind awake to these appeals, which the changing seasons make to his feelings and his gratitude. Let us avail ourselves of the bringtening prospects of the present month, to see in its glory that of our creator, and to strengthen our pious feeling that we may more worthily adore. The passion of our glorious Redeemer, who is celebrated by the church in this season, ought duly to be born in mind. O that, our attention fixed on it, we may conclude the month as Christians should, and without subjecting ourselves to self-reproach. But the wish is vain, unless backed by a firm and virtuous determination, to act so as to deserve the love and compassion of Jesus, who died for our salvation. We will then seek but to think and speak as we ought, and endeavour, on each succeeding day, to do, with the assistance of God, some good action.

Our great study shall be how to fulfil our duty. While all nature around us wakes from the sleep of nature, we must not be found indolently supine. We will take the hint which the buds and the blossoms give, and seek to put forth new claims to render ourselves acceptable in the sight of God. By due cultivation of the mind we may grow in grace as the shrubs and trees increase in size. Our beauty may expand with love and devotion, and be acceptable in the sight of God, as the flowers which decorate the garden, are to the mortal eye. Reviving nature bids us rejoice; the sufferings of a precious Saviour demands tears of penitence. We will unite both. Sincerely mourning those sins for which he endured the agony of the cross, we will enjoy the splendid scene which the renovated beauties of the season gives to the eye; and reflect that Christ died that we might exult in blissful life. Hearts! awake to true devotion, be comforted, thou art converted to God!

### THE JOYS OF HEAVEN ABOVE MORTAL COMPREHENSION.

The apostle tells us, that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Such pure refined delights not only stoop not unto sense, but are sublime enough even to transcend imagination. When fancy hath formed and shaped the perfectest ideas that its abstractions can make of blessedness; our own more happy experiences of greater, must disabuse us, when we come to heaven; which is a soil, whose fruitfulness is so confined to joy, that even our disappointments and mistakes shall there contribute to our happiness; which will so much partake of his immensity, whose gift it is, that you see the apostle gives it a negative description: and to create in us apprehensions underogatory from what we shall possess, not only removes our thoughts from all we do enjoy, but exalts them above all that we can fancy. At which way of proceeding, that you may the less wonder, Lindamor, be pleased to consider, that in heaven our faculties shall not only be gratified with suitable and acceptable objects, but shall be heightened and enlarged, and consequently our capacities of happiness, as well increased as filled. A child not yet released out of the homely prison of the womb, cannot there possibly frame ideas of those delights, which will be afforded him by the pleasing noises, and the glittering objects, that will present themselves to him after his birth. And the same child, whilst he continues in his nonage, though he may with delights look upon emblems finely drawn and painted, and may take some pleasure in beholding the neat and surprising characters and flourishes of a Greek and Hebrew bible curiously printed; yet he cannot then imagine the pleasure the same objects will afford him, when age and study shall have ripened and instructed his intellectuals, and make him capable both of understanding and relishing the excellent moralities couched in those ingenious emblems, and the profound and saving mysteries, wherewith that divine book, the Scripture, (especially in its original tongues) does to an intelligent and religious peruser, appear replenished.

### EVENING .- MARCH 1.

### WATCHING BY NIGHT.

Watchman! tell us of the night, What its signs of promise are? Traveller! o'er yon mountain's height, See that glory-beaming star! Watchman! does its beauteous ray Aught of hope or joy foretell? Traveller! yes: it brings the day-Promised day of Israel! Watchman! tell us of the night: Higher yet that star ascends: Traveller! blessedness and light, Peace and truth its course portends. Watchman! will its beams alone Gild the spot that gave them birth? Traveller! ages are its own, And it bursts o'er all the earth. Watchman! tell us of the night, For the morning seems to dawn: Traveller! darkness takes its flight. Doubt and terror are withdrawn. Watchman! let thy wanderings cease, Hie thee to thy quiet home: Traveller! lo! the prince of peace, Lo! the Son of God is come!

GOD'S JUSTICE AND MERCY IMPLORED. ISAIAH LXIV.

1 Oh that thou wouldest read the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.

2 As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thy adversaries,

that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

3 When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

4 For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: Behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7 And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

8 But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are the work of thy hand.

9 ¶ Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

### CHRIST'S MEDIATION ACCEPTED.

Be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd

As many as are restor'd, without thee none. His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit, Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds, And live in thee transplanted, and from thee Receive new life. So man, as is most just, Shall satisfy for Man, be judg'd and die, And dying rise, and rising with him raise His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life. So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate, Giving to death, and dying to redeem, So dearly to redeem what hellish hate So easily destroy'd, and still destroys In those who, when they may, accept not grace. Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own. Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss Equal to God, and equally enjoying God-like fruition, quitted all, to save A world from utter loss, and hast been found By merit more than birthright Son of God, Found worthiest to be so by being good, Far more than great or high; because in thee Love hath abounded more than grace abounds, Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt With thee thy manhood also to this throne; Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man, Anointed universal King; all power I give thee; reign for ever, and assume Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme, Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce: All knees to thee shall bow.

Milton.

# APPROPRIATE CELEBRATIONS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

"Ye shall not fast as ye do this day," was the language addressed by the prophet Isaiah to his people. These words may also be, without impropriety, addressed to our contemporaries. When they take upon themselves to arrange a celebration of the sufferings and death of Jesus, can we persuade ourselves that it is a worthy celebration of what he has done, merely to abstain from certain kinds of food which, at other times, we are accustomed to take? The superstition of the people in former ages was wont to bring forth such observances, and to attach great importance to them, forgetting the words of scripture, which say to us, "let no man judge you in meat and in drink." To abstain, in some instances, partially or wholly from food, to prepare ourselves in the flesh, is a good external discipline, as temperance has always a tendency to prompt devotional feelings. In this point of view, as an accessary to holy meditation, fasting may occasionally be strongly recommended; but if we are told that we must constantly celebrate the sufferings and death of Jesus by such abstinence, the prophet has taught us that this is not required. His words are, "Ye shall not fast as ye do this day." Be it our answer, "We will obey thee, O Lord! as at other times at this holy time. We will not judge ourselves in meat or in drink, for every creature of God is good; nothing is to be refused, but all is to be received with devout gratitude." We will now, as at other times, in this solemn season of the year, be sober and watchful, and often addressing ourselves to our Creator in prayer; but we will keep our thoughts earnestly fixed on the mighty price which was paid for our ransom, never forgetting how much God loved that world, which he gave his only son to redeem.

Not to abstain from certain kinds of food, will not suffice for the limit of our devotion, but we will abstain from those sins which are offensive in the sight of God. Not merely will we fast in flesh, but we will resist all impure desires. Such is the sacrifice which we desire to offer to our eternal Father, not only during the season of Lent, but now, henceforth, and for ever. Recalling the bitter sufferings endured for us, and the painful death to which Jesus submitted, we will celebrate them with solemn feelings, with appropriate gratitude. Whatever may elevate our thoughts on this subject, we will court; whatever may prevent grateful recollection of them we will avoid. We will respect the regulations of the church, which forbid all indecorous noises during this solemn period, and be guided by directions suitable to sacred meditation. May superior intelligence teach us to reflect upon such topics this evening more seriously than we have done throughout the day! May we not lose this important impression, but retain it constantly in our minds! Waking or sleeping, at all seasons, may holy meditation occupy our thoughts, and prepare us for a happier state of being.

### MORNING,—MARCH 2.

### MERCY IMPLORED.

To God, in whom I trust,
I lift my heart and voice;
O let me not be put to shame,
Nor let my foes rejoice.
Since mercy is the grace
That most exalts thy fame,
Forgive my heinous sins, O Lord,
And so advance thy name.
For God to all his saints
His sacred will imparts,
And does his gracious cov'nant write

In their obedient hearts.

Drummond's Collection.

THE WEAKNESS OF MAN'S RESOLUTION. MARK XIV.

26 ¶ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ve shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said

they all.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face. and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh

one of the maids of the high priest:

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Na-

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not

this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

### OUR FAITH WEAK WITHOUT AID FROM ABOVE.

"I do not know the man," were the words of Peter when he was accused of being one of the followers of our Lord. While reading of this denial, we often feel disposed to condemn him with bitterness, and to give ourselves credit for strength of mind, that, in the same circumstances, would enable us to act a nobler part, and forbid us to be afraid to avow the truth as he was. Yet if we seriously reflect on all that was passing in his bosom, which caused his misconduct, we can easily believe that our resolution is no more to be depended upon than his was. We have no sufficient reason for dispensing with the admonition, "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." Alas! we but imperfectly know our own hearts! we have not yet been exposed to the temptations that others were doomed to encounter, and we are unable to anticipate with certainty what our feelings, what our resolves might eventually be, if we were assailed on our weakest points, and had no assistance at hand to animate our courage and sustain our fortitude.

With all humility we desire to confess that our flesh is weak, our heart corrupted by sin, and our mortal strength anything but great. We are incapable of successfully resisting the allurements of temptation, unless guided and supported by the illustrious example and holy precepts of our blessed Lord. In how many instances have we already proved faithless, how often has our determination to resist sin, and to be faithful to virtue. proved unavailing, and been wholly forgotten amidst the cares of the world! We are living in a state of society where countless evils beset our path, all tending to shake our faith. We feel we require assistance from above. That withheld, we must unquestionably fall. God of mercy! in thy great goodness forbid that our passions betray us to sin! and succeed in alienating us from thee. Should we be so unfortunate as temporarily to forget our God, Oh grant that we may speedily discover and repent our error as Peter did. If like him we sin, grant that, like him, we may speedily feel contrition for the offence committed against our Saviour. Let thy forbearance and kindness be thus manifested, and humbly we trust henceforward to prove unalterably faithful, as did the apostle.

Great would be our alarm, great indeed our sorrow, at the sight of the manifest dangers which threaten our integrity, at the numerous snares which are spread for our feet, at the painted sepulchres which in this world open before us, if we could not rely with confidence on the mercy of our great Creator, and on the assistance of his holy spirit; if we could not securely hope that God will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, and that he will give us, as sincere believers in Jesus Christ, adequate strength to meet the evil. While such is our well founded belief, it still behoves us solemnly to meditate on the important truth, that every man is in danger when drawn away by his own impure desires, and enticed to pursue worldly pleasures. It must be our anxious care to direct all our efforts to subduing low and sinful propensities, to curing those deplorable infirmities which belong to our debased nature, and to watching every throb of our hearts with ceaseless vigilance, in order to suppress the germ of sin in an incipient state.

Then let us watch and pray that we may not be led astray. If we do this with sincere devo-

tion, our God will not disdain to grant his assistance. If we thus wisely labour in the cause of our salvation we shall not go unregarded. Ever, gracious Saviour, may the thought of thy love fructify in our hearts! For us thou hast already done much. Condescend this day to increase the sum of the blessings we have to acknowledge by the power and influence of thy sacred word, and let the testimony of our own approving conscience, impelled by the force of truth, bring us nearer than ever to thee. In thy bounty forbid that we shall frustrate or leave imperfect the good work which thou hast begun in our hearts. Let us hear when thou callest, follow where thou wouldst lead, and in all our doings turn to thee with a penitent, a contrite, and devout spirit. So often as thou mayest be pleased to put to each of us the all-important question, "lovest thou me?" Oh grant that we eagerly, sincerely, and joyfully as Peter did, may be enabled to reply, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

### KNOWLEDGE IN HEAVEN.

There, discerning how exquisitely the several parts of scripture are fitted to the several times, persons, and occurrences, wherein their all-foreseeing Author intended most to use them; we shall discern not only a reconcileableness, but a friendship, and perfect harmony, betwixt those texts, that here seem most at variance, and shall discover not only the sense of the obscurer passages, but the requisiteness of their having been written so obscurely. That strange and peculiar, as well as otherwise cryptical method and style of scripture, which often costs us so much study to find it rational, we shall there discover to be admirable, and worthy of its omniscient Author. There, I hope, we shall have clearly expounded to us those riddles of providence, which have, but too often, tempted even good men to question God's conduct in the government of the world; whilst the calamities and persecutions of virtue, and innocence, seem approved by him, who accumulates prosperities on their criminal opposers. There, we shall be convinced, that all these seeming irregularities, which the heathen thought fit to impute to the giddy whimsies of a blind female deity, are not only consistent with God's justice and goodness, but are productions of it. And though such a belief do here, to intelligent persons, seem perhaps a greater piece of self-denial, than to refrain from wine, gold, or mistresses; yet in heaven it will appear as reasonable, as here we find it difficult. For, as Bildad speaks in Job, "We are but as yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are but a shadow." And the shortness of our transitory lives, not permitting us to continue long enough spectators here, to see above a scene or two at most of that great play, acted by mankind upon the stage of the world; 'tis no wonder, we are apt to harbour sinister thoughts of the contriver of a plot, whose neither beginning nor end we are acquainted with. Which yet is little less injurious, that 'twere to censure the lofty tragedian, Seneca, or some other matchless artist, having perused but a piece of some tragedy, whereof the later part never arrived at our view. Boyle.

### EVENING .- MARCH 2.

### GOD'S AID INVOKED.

Amidst thy wrath remember love, Restore thy servant, Lord, Nor let a Father's chast'ning prove Like an avenger's sword.

My thoughts are like a troubled sea, My head still bending down; And I go mourning all the day, Beneath my father's frown.

All my desire to thee is known,
Thine eye counts every tear,
And every sigh, and every groan,
Is noticed by thine ear.

My God, forgive my follies past, And be for ever nigh, O Lord of my salvation, haste, Before thy servant die.

Watts.

# GOD'S MIGHT DISPLAYED. THE JUST SECURE. ISAIAH XXXIII.

2 O Lord, be gracious unto us, we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up to thyself the nations wert scattered.

4 And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar; as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

5 The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high; he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

6 And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation; the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

7 Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambas-

sadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

8 The high ways lie waste, the way-faring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

9 The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness: and Bashan

and Carmel shake off their fruits.

10 Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted: now will I lift up myself.

11 Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble; your breath, as fire, shall devour you.

12 And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

13 ¶ Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might.

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

15 He that walketh 'righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

16 He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.

GOD'S GOODNESS AND WISDOM MAN'S SAFEGUARD.

"Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker: let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the world." Alas, for how many sufferers on this globe is the woe here indicated, reserved! True it is, as we can easily conceive, that it is in opposition to the will of God, as it is in opposition to our own nature, that we should rest, dumb, and coldly insensible, under the pressure of severe tribulation; but if, in such distressing seasons, we seek to strive with him who made us, the vain effort will serve but to render our case more hopeless, our sufferings more unbearable. Yet how frequently does it occur, that, our patience exhausted, we forget to submit to the visitations of Heaven with appropriate humility. "Wretch that I am," exclaims the infidel, "destined still to know continual pain, it would seem as if fate itself pursued my steps, with steady unrelenting rancour. I was just on the point of gaining the dearest object of my life, for which I have toiled so long, when a fatal chance threw me back from the prize. That I may no longer think of the mournful reverses I have known, let me seek the gay distractions of dissipated pleasure, and strive, in mirthful associations, to lose the acute sense of disappointment and cureless grief. Mine, it is true, is not a singular case; I have the consolation to know that others experience similar affliction, but still they feel it not as I do. Unquestionably it cannot last for ever; death will eventually release the weary spirit; but must this aching heart only find relief in death? Why, why should I be denied all happiness on earth, while others have their fill of enjoyment? This thought tortures me more than all the rest. Others, not more worthy than myself, pass their hours in laughing happiness, satisfied with the good they are permitted to realise, while I am doomed to consume my days in hopeless grief. Am I inferior to those who are so favoured? I cannot think it. Can Justice, then, doom me thus to suffer?"

Weak man, be still. What! is the potsherd to strive with the potter of the clay? What is man, that he should murmur at the wise decrees of his eternal Creator? Oh God! who permittest every temptation to go abroad, but to some wise end, grant that we may be enabled to resist those which come in our way. Blind as we are, we know not what is essential to our benefit;—we ask thee not to send the desolating storm of

winter, or to pour upon us the chilling showers of snow, to purify the air, and refresh the globe which we inhabit, and thus prepare for the gay return of glorious spring. Great and Omniscient! without thy will, not a single hair can fall from our heads; and to thee we desire to offer the accents of praise, even for having humbled us: for casting us down, that we may be again lifted up. We have deserved to suffer; and thy visitations, keenly as we may feel them, are more wholesome to our souls, than all the unsubstantial enjoyments of a life devoted to thoughtless mirth. Confident of this, we will own thy goodness, even when thy face seems averted from us: we will not fall into sin, by unworthily striving with thee.

Little should we know our own strength, if we were not, from time to time, thus proved. The loadstone which has never been used to sustain any weight, loses, in the course of years, its power; and so, had we no burthen to bear, the energies of our minds would waste away. But, happier still, from these passing sorrows, we gain the blessed conviction that we are thy children, because we are chastised by thy paternal hand. Why, then, away with weak repinings! Like St. Paul we will rejoice in our tribulations and our sufferings, since they lead to Christ.

He who wills not the death of a sinner, would, we know, have no pleasure in our tears, if they were not eventually to benefit us. Our God has not promised us many happy days on earth; such we have no right to expect, and it would be presumption to claim such boon, if we expected to pass to heaven by any other way than that which our predecessors in the Christian faith have trodden. Let us, in a spirit of pure resignation. be prepared to pray and to suffer. Father of all! grant us patience, grant us strength. Addressing our humble supplications to thee, our bosoms are already relieved. Oh! how vast is the comfort of striving under the eye of a merciful God! How great is that everlasting reward which mercy grants to recompense the brief minutes of suffering we experience below. We will not, then, strive with our Maker. When thou, O Lord, art pleased to impose sufferings upon us, grant us resolution to bear them with patience, and let us not resemble those who have neither faith nor hope. At all times, at all seasons, with unshaken confidence and love, our voices shall be lifted up in thy praise.



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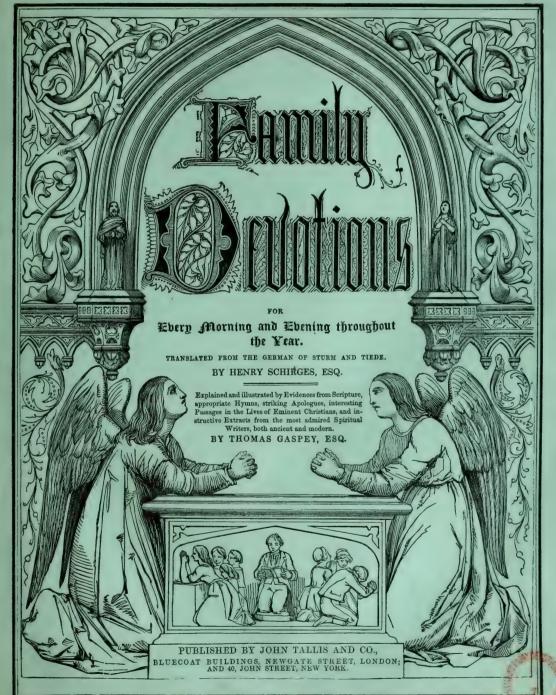
Having this object in view, to render the study of Scripture as pleasing to young minds as it is important, they have selected the most astonishing scenes there They have brought forward what religious remembered; and to assist the mind more readily to Animals, and many remarkable objects peculiar to the East; thus giving what is an essential part of human grasp them, Pictorial Embellishments have been proparents must consider especially worthy to be noted and usely supplied, which correctly present the Costumes, earning, in connexion with a solemn record of the greatness, the mercies, and the judgments of the Deity ecorded.

By the success of their efforts, they trust those for whom they have toiled will derive equal entertainment and profit from these unpretending pages, which in effect would but say to the young,

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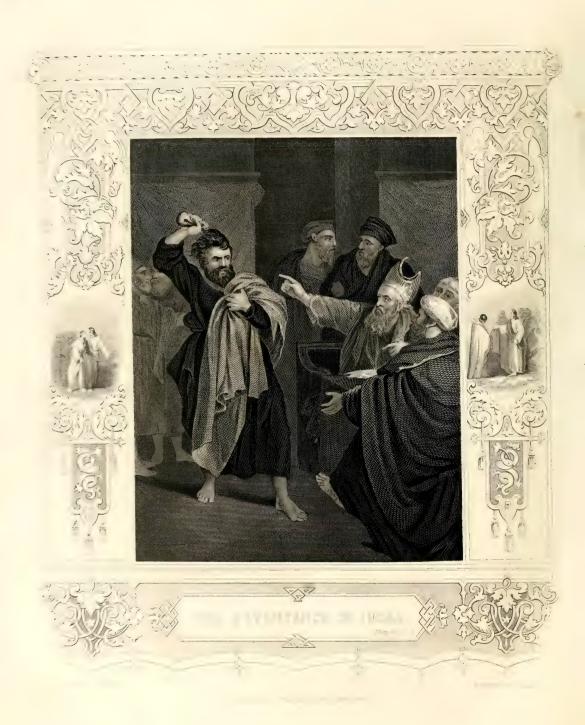
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# THE BELIEVER'S PROGRESS. HIS CONSOLATIONS IN AGE AND DECAY.

A believer young in years, and young in experience, is often tempted to judge of himself by his feelings, more than by the word of God. In a good frame he is a good believer. Then all is well with him: but when he is walking in darkness, he is very apt to question his state. If all be right with me, why am I thus? My present frame is very dull and uncomfortable—I am not so lively as I used to be in prayer, or in ordinances—my delight in God, and the things of God, is far short of what it was formerly, perhaps I have been deceiving myself, and crying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace for me.

From this temptation, age itself is a sort of deliverance: selfactivity is weakened, and thereby, through grace, self-dependence. The believer, if he be a good scholar, will now learn to walk more by faith, and less by sight: the vigour of his senses is decaying; the high spirits of youth are abating; his present lesson is very plain and simple, and while he attends to what is passing in him and about him, he has a thousand monitors, calling upon him now to learn and practise a perfect dependence on those things which are always one and the same, without any variableness, or the least shadow of turning. One record of God. One Saviour. One Spirit. One faith, of which the Saviour is the author and finisher. This faith is made to grow and flourish, as there is less dependence on other things: and as age itself tends to weaken this dependence, it becomes in the hand of the Holy Spirit a favourable time to live less upon the things which are seen, and more upon the things which are not seen. Less of sense, more of faith. One scale rises as the other falls. The outward man dying, the inward man grows more lively-yea, grows up into Christ Jesus, and that in all things. O blessed old man-thou hast lived to a good time, when this is thy experience: when in the prayer of faith thou canst cast all thy burdens on thy Saviour: "Lord, keep me, a poor heipless creature. Now I feel, that of myself I can do nothing as I ought, or as I wish to do. Glorify thy grace in me, and strengthen me mightly by thy spirit in the inner man, that I may bless thee for thy salvation, and for the things which accompany salvation. Into thy faithful hands, for life and death, I commit myself, and all my concerns; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth."

But it must be remembered, that old age does not produce these happy effects of itself. It is not of nature, but entirely of grace, that any one is able to gain such spiritual profit from bodily infirmities. The mere natural man, fortify him with all his boasted aids of reason and philosophy, yet he cannot help murmuring when age brings weakness, and sickness brings pains. He becomes peevish and fretful. Having no friendship with God, he cannot look up for divine supports, when all human begin to fail him. He is often out of all patience. Uneasy in himself, he is out of humour with every body and everything. How different is the believer in the same circumstances! His body feels pain as others do: but his mind is comfortable, and at ease. Happy in God, he has patience given him to bear his sufferings, and grace to profit from them; yea, the peace of God rules in his heart always, and by all means.

An old man with this peace, which surpasseth all understanding, ruling in his heart, will be so far from complaining, that he has everything to he thankful for, which can render him blessed of the Lord.

Romaine.

# MORNING.-MARCH 3

#### CHRIST'S TRIUMPH.

Rejoice, the Saviour reigns Among the sons of men; He breaks the prisoner's chains, And makes them free again: Let hell oppose God's only Son, In spite of foes, his cause goes on.

The cause of righteousness, And truth, and holy peace, Design'd our world to bless. Shall spread and never cease: Gentile and Jew, their souls shall bow, Allegiance due, with rapture vow.

The baffled prince of hell
In vain new projects tries
Truth's empire to repel,
By cruelty and lies:
The infernal gates shall rage in vain,
Conquest awaits the lamb once slain.

He died, but soon arose Triumphant o'er the grave; And now himself he shows Omnipotent to save: Let rebels kiss the victor's feet, Eternal bliss his subjects meet.

#### FIRMNESS OF CHRIST. MATTHEW XXVI.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.
49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, mas-

ter; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high-priest's, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with

the sword

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour sai'l Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thiet with swords and staves, for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him,

and fled.

57 ¶ And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off u to the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. 59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This fellow said. I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priests answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God, 64 Jesus saith unto him, thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?

behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy:

66 What think ye? they answered and said, He is guilty of death.

67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands.

68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?

# IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THE EXAMPLE SET BY CHRIST IN HIS SUFFERINGS.

The sad, the affecting words of our Saviour. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," we muse on with interest. They are ever dear to the Christian's heart. Looking at them. we seem to be with him at Gethsemane. We perceive in them clear indications of the acute suffering which the Saviour of man experienced, while fulfilling his glorious task, the redemption of the world; and we glow with admiration of that sublime devotion which, knowing this before, was still prepared, with unvielding firmness, to die in the great and holy cause. How shall we teach our minds to imitate, in some degree. and therefore to deserve, that effort of invincible fortitude? We must learn from Jesus, the way in which it is to be done. Look, my heart, towards Gethsemane! Behold the Saviour struggling with calamity; his strength will surely fail him ;-yet, stay, he speaks: "Oh my Father! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Here we see the weakness of that nature which he had taken upon himself, with all its painful sensibilities. But our illustrious Captain soon resumes his intrepidity and vigour. How is this accomplished? He prays. Jesus falls upon his knees, and bows his face to the earth. His supplications are repeated; and, with increased fervour, he still prostrates himself before God, and desists not till he feels himself invigorated, and prepared for the scene through which he has yet to pass. And ought we to suppose that we can dispense with praying to our Creator, for his countenance and support, if the Son of God was unequal to the performance of his task without it? Never let us entertain the thought. Our prayers must be like his, persevering; like his, fervent. If we

render them so, like him we shall finally be comforted, as our Saviour was.

Let us pause, to remark upon the manner of our Lord. How striking is his submission to the will of the Eternal! The sufferings which he then endured were intense; such as no man can describe, such as ear hath seldom heard of. They arrested him in the midst of his mortal career, overwhelmed him with disgrace among the Jews; misery in every shape assailed him, and comforters were few. Yet, still resigned to the will of his Father, and resolute to complete his labour, he is ready to drink the bitter cup from which human nature shrinks; and we find his prayer is, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

What are our petty tribulations, compared with those which Jesus encountered in that awful hour? Yet do we not frequently lose patience, when but slightly afflicted, and feel inclined to doubt the goodness of our God? How humble, how abashed, ought we to feel, when we look towards Jesus, the patient and enduring Jesus! May he, in his goodness, inspire our hearts with sentiments fitted to our condition! May we learn to look up to him, when, fainting in the struggle against sin, we become lukewarm in the cause of virtue, and refractory under the severe visitations of God! May the glorious issue of the sufferings of our Saviour inspire the sacred hope that our sorrows also will reach a glorious termination! May it be proved in us, that God's ways are the best, and that his holy will, however imperfectly this may be perceived by our debased hearts, will cause all things to work together for good. Christ is our consola-We know that he has gained, by his sacrifice, comfort and salvation for us. interceding love will cause our sighs to be heard; his victory will render our triumph easy, and the angel who strengthened him will likewise comfort us; and how consoling, O Jesus! is thy cross, at once the symbol of thy sufferings and thy death, and also that of thy glory, and our everlasting happiness.

When these reflections come over our minds, when we recal the words of our Lord, so expressive of unmitigated anguish, we ought ever to have a lively sense of the solemn truths which they are calculated to recal. May they be deeply impressed on our hearts, and constantly borne in mind, that we, assured of future happiness, may joyfully praise our great Redeemer, from time to time, for all that he has suffered and accomplished for us!

#### BENEFITING OTHERS WE SERVE OURSELVES.

We are sadly negligent, brethren, in the performance of this duty. We seem indeed to have almost forgotten that it is our duty to be deeply and tenderly concerned for the eternal happiness of our brethren. We think it wrong to suffer their bodily wants to remain unrelieved, but as for the wants of their souls, we hardly think of them; we seem as though we could suffer them to perish for ever, without a single effort to snatch them from destruction. We lament perhaps at seasons, their ignorance and folly, and when they die, we wish that they had died Christians; but sighs and wishes are not all that Christ requires at our hands. He reminds us of what he has done for our own souls. He points to the manger and the cross, and tells us to let the same mind be in us, that was in him. He bids us deny ourselves for the salvation of others, to labour in the work, and, if need be, to suffer, rather than desist from it.

And even if this command had not been given us, a regard to our own happiness and spiritual prosperity might have suggested it to us. If we succeed in persuading others to join us in our journey to Canaan, we win souls not only to Christ, but to ourselves also: we increase the number of those, who are the fellow-helpers of our joy. Those whom we prevail on to travel with us, will assist us and comfort us in our wearisome pilgrimage. We shall take sweet council together, and walk in the house of God in company. Who can tell how much we shall be animated by their love and zeal? how much the languid spirit of devotion within us will be quickened by their burning hearts? how much we shall be cheered in our spiritual trials by their sympathy and prayers? And O! who can say what our reward will be when we enter heaven? "They that be wise," says the scripture, "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament : and they, that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

Bradley.

# EVENING .- MARCH 3.

#### FORGIVENESS IMPLORED

O think not on our former sins, But speedily prevent The utter ruin of thy saints, Who now with grief repent.

Thou God of our salvation, help, And free our souls from blame: So shall our pardon and defence Exalt thy glorious name.

So we, thy people and thy flock, Shall ever praise thy name; And with glad hearts our grateful thanks From age to age proclaim.

Drummond's Collection.

MEN SHOULD EDIFY EACH OTHER. ROMANS XIV.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day more than another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded

in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day to the Lord, he doth not

regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block on an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

#### TO ADMONISH OTHERS.

The Author of the universe is especially to be adored, for that he has rendered man capable of reflection, capable of feeling, that it is his business to adore. We have, however, to lament that too generally forgetfulness has come over the human race, and negligence and ingratitude are visible in all their ordinary actions.

It is the presence and merciful interference of God, alone, that can call the wanderers from their evil ways, and render them duly sensible of the value of things not of earth, and of the importance of turning their thoughts to those which are

immortal.

God reads the hearts of men, and the soul that is conscious of being faithful to duty, exults amidst all the scorn and persecution of which it may be the object, that its thoughts are known to him who cannot be deceived. Humbly we now present ourselves before thee, O Lord! and trust we presume not too much, in saying, thou knowest it is our earnest desire to observe thy laws, and spread afar the knowledge of thy name.

We humbly thank thee for all benefits received, and hope it is known to thee, that had affluence been ours, to have acted as thy almoners to distribute thy bounties to the indigent, and to relieve the sinking heart from its woe, would to us have been happiness. Had the powers of healing the various maladies which afflict humanity been granted to us, we persuade ourselves we could have experienced no joy like that of recalling vanished health and happiness to those who languished in sickness and sorrow. Earnestly will we hope, if these are withheld, that the still greater good, that of teaching our erring fellow-creatures the way to peace, the road that leads to heaven, it will still be our happiness to possess and to exercise.

May blessed effects result from our endeavours to enlighten the ignorant and awaken the sleeper. Let us not presume, in the arrogance of human reason, to speak as from ourselves; but let us at all times endeavour to appear to our fellows the ministers of thy truth. By our arguments and our example, enable us to rouse others who have too long neglected their soul's welfare, to beneficial exertion in the cause of religion. May their worthy efforts tend to thy glory, and prove the source of blessings to millions still unborn. Labouring with unaffected zeal in thy cause, with such a purpose, we trust eventually to appear before thee among those who are saved through the mediation of Jesus.

Those who are careless, it shall be our especial care to bring to a sense of the importance of studying thy word. We will speak plainly to them, not with the timidity that may be misunderstood, yet not with a harshness that must repel. We will not assume that they are profane and profligate, that they are blasphemers or wanton violators of the sabbath; but we will admonish them not to neglect those studies which a sense of duty would impose. We would fain fix their attention on the existence and providence of God, on the truth of Christianity, and the importance of revelation. We would teach them to examine their own hearts, and, communing with themselves, to enquire what is their real interest. Then would they be led to ask themselves the momentous question, Are we religious? Is the love of God our governing principle? do we act under a sense of his presence? do we commune with him from day to day in prayer and thankfulness? and do we obey God as a servant should a master, or as a child should a father? In this way bringing reflection to perform its duty, we humbly desire to restore our wandering fellowcreatures to happiness. Let thy hand be with us, that they may not go on from day to day forgetful of God, but let them become solicitous to obtain forgiveness for their sins, let them hear to understand, and seeing, perceive, and feel how necessary it is that they should know what God and Christ are, as well as what they themselves are now, and must be hereafter.

Oh may it be ours to become the means of benefiting others! Awakened ourselves, may we, ere yet it is too late, seek them as the mariners did Jonah, when sleeping in the midst of the storm, and say to them, "what meanest thou, Oh sleeper! arise and call upon thy God."

## ERROR NOT TO PASS UNREBUKED.

"Paul withstood Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed!" How sad! would the cautious moderates saythat there should be any difference between two inspired apostles-what scandal to the church-give up anything rather than witness such a lamentable schism! Paul thought and acted otherwise-let there be division-apostle against apostle, bishop against bishop-rather than that the truth of God should be sacrified, or bondage and superstition brought in. No! the apostle did not inculcate the moderation of indifference, which, beneath the mask of cautious prudence, conceals the real levity of principle which cares not enough for truth to induce a man to contend for it; nor the moderation of indecision, weakness and imbecility-affecting the via media, because there is not strength of mind to choose a way for itself: much less the moderation of cowardice, which pretends to prudence and caution only because the coward heart is afraid to profess the truth: - nor the moderation of the cunning and crafty, who affect superior wisdom, suspend their judgment, watching the opportunity to join the winning game, and to side with the strongest! Unspeakably mischievous are all such persons in perilous times-and grievously is the Christian grace of moderation prostituted, when it is used by them only as a mask to cover such unworthy motives.

What then is this duty which the apostle inculcates? It is indeed a widely diffused and extended principle which affects the whole Christian character, and reduces all its parts to symmetry and order. It is like the compensating power in machinery-the fly-wheel which regulates the action of the whole-it originates nothing, but guides, adjusts, and proportions all. Viewed passively—it is that Christian grace which chastises and corrects the soul in trial and afflictionsubduing inordinate passions-chastening grief-moderating the feelings-checking both excessive joy and overmuch sorrow-teaching the Christian "to weep as though he wept not, to rejoice as though he rejoiced not, because the fashion of this world passeth away." Towards man; his treachery, fickleness, unkindness, enmity, are borne with meekness, patience, and love—as from God, his chastening hand. Viewed actively, Christian moderation is a maturity of character which enables a man fitly to discharge any duties which devolve upon him :- in the execution of important trusts, with calm determination, he will be as stern and unbending as the heathen Brutus-while with godly people he turns aside to weep! As a magistrate he will enforce the law in its just rigour-while as a man and a Christian his charity will convey into the hand of the culprit pauper, the proofs of his benevolence. As a father, he will not withhold the scourge from the rebellious child, while pity and affection gush forth from his eyes. And as a Pastor—a steward of the mysteries of God—what a combination of wisdom, firmness, affection and tenderness should form the Pastor's moderation! Adhering to the truth with a tenacity unbending as the native oak of a century's growth—but contending in a manner and temper as pliant as the ivy which entwines itself around it: ready to sacrifice self—credit—reputation, but refusing to yield one jot or tittle of his master's honour and glory.

Rev. F. Close.

# MORNING.-MARCH 4.

GLORY TO GOD FOR HIS MERCY.

There's joy in heaven, and joy on earth, When prodigals return To see desponding souls rejoice, And haughty sinners mourn.

"Come, saints, and hear what God hath done" Is a reviving sound:
O may it spread from sea to sea, E'en all the globe around!

Often, O sovereign Lord, renew
The wonders of this day;
That Jesus here may see his seed,
And Satan lose his prey.

Great God, the work is all thine own,
Thine be the praises too;
Let every heart and every tongue
Give thee the glory due.

Rippon's Collection.

GOD'S GOODNESS. HIS WORSHIPPERS' DUTY.

LAMENTATIONS, III.

22 ¶ It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.
24 The LORD is my portion, faith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.

26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath

borne it upon him.

29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

30 He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

31 For the LORD will not cast off for ever:

32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

34 To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, 35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High,

36 To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth

37 ¶ Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the LORD commandeth it not?

38 Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil

39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD

41 Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.

#### THE FOLLY OF DEFERRING REPENTANCE.

"Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent," These admonishing words are the solemn exhortation addressed of old to the Ephesian community. To us they may also be addressed with equal propriety. But, though they are presented to our eyes, how carelessly, and with what hardihood do we advance on life's road, regardless of the transgressions which we have committed, and which have been accumulating against us for many a day, and for many a week, without any zealous effort being made on our part to atone for them, or even to solicit pardon from the mercy of our God. A transient glance at them, a momentary feeling of regret, unproductive of any good act, or wise resolution, are all that we can set against so fearful an arrear of sin. But we are afraid, or rather we expect and hope, that this culpable negligence, this blind indifference, will not always continue. indulge the belief that a time will necessarily come, when, the full extent of our wanderings known, the aim of our existence better understood, a thorough soul-searching conversion will be the result, and our hearts, filled with Jesus Christ, encouraged and strengthened by the holy spirit of God, and awake to the sad condition of those who are forgetful of eternal things, we shall at length rise superior to the vanities of life, and no longer be the servants of a hard master to our own undoing. Indifferent, as we have heretofore seemed, on the subject of our immortal destiny, we shall not feel so when our fainting powers assure us that death is at hand. But, alas! if, till that dread moment arrives, we alter not our course. how awfully will the terrors of death, and the thought of a dreadful futurity, then come over us. Then a burthen unknown before will press upon the sinking sufferer with annihilating weight, and crush him to the earth. Sad will be our case at that moment, when conscience is aroused by every thing that can appal; the opening grave before us, our mortal existence about to close. and judgment to come disclosed to our startled imagination, will leave no rest in our bones, no comfort in our hearts, and we shall in vain look around in that hour of hopeless dismay, for a place

of refuge.

On this position of things let us for a moment solemnly pause. How vain, how utterly valueless and ineffectual will then be all the methods which have as yet been by us but too efficiently employed to lull conscience to sleep. The delusions to which we now surrender ourselves, can no longer console, and the mind will be a stranger to repose. It can never again be soothed by the sophistry which has heretofore so frequently prevailed. Nothing, nothing that we can claim will then be able to speak peace to the troubled spirit, as we have resolutely, in the early part of our career, repelled from us the one thing needful, which would have secured our happiness.

That awful day we know must surely arrive to all that now inhabit this planet. Why then, let us ask ourselves, should we not be true converts before it comes? Why not, even from this moment, collect our thoughts, and fortify ourselves with holy strength, with that strength that can only be derived from a blameless conscience and a pious life? These, and these only will ensure us a calm and joyous passage to eternity. Why then should we hesitate?—Why still delay, instead of exerting ourselves with all possible expedition to make our calling and election sure, that we may stand firm in our faith, and be numbered among the heirs of glory? We know not how closely we have already approached to our end. To each of us it may be said "this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Let us not imagine that we are too feeble to adopt resolves which are obviously essential to our welfare-we will not suppose the most alluring blandishments of a wanton life are too fascinating to be resisted. God has not forsaken us; shall we have to lament that our own hearts, our own reason, have deserted us, and that we are incapable of a determined effort even when the prize of everlasting life is in view.

Far be from us the idle, the disparaging, the dreadful apprehensions. Our God has not abandoned us, for are we not told in his holy word "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The Lord of all so loved sinful man, that he gave up his son to secure mortal redemption; Jesus Christ, to save us, became our friend and our unfailing guide. True, unhappily it is, that our thoughts too often stray from heaven, and are willing to

regard with complaisance the vanities of a wicked world. Weighed down by its adhesive dross, the spirit cannot raise itself with cheerfulness and firm reliance on God, to that pitch of devotion to which, by resignation, prayer, and faithful watchfulness, it might be elevated. This is one of the mournful conditions of our present state of being. and we, still withdrawn from the right path by the love of pleasure, may continue to rest in fatal security, if thou, Oh gracious Father! dost not, in thy infinite goodness, assist our weakness, and save thy trembling servants from their own misdoings. But this thought is our comfort. that God is powerful and omniscient. Thou, Lord of all, canst impart strength to the weak heart, which thou seest in danger of sinking in the unequal strife, and give it courage, to "fight the good fight," so that by its perfect devotion to thee, it may eventually overcome all through the merits of Him who died that man might live. This comfort we humbly solicit, this blessed support, this encouraging faith, we pray may be ours. Oh let it soothe and sustain us to the last, so that in that important moment, when we feel that we must instantly "go hence and be no more seen," we may be strong in our confidence, that thou wilt be with us still, and that dying, we shall gain a new life, which will know no termination.

#### THE WORKS OF GOD ARE MAN'S TEACHERS.

"The lights of heaven," says a late pious and learned writer, "in their order are all applied to give us conceptions of God's power and the glory of his kingdom. In the lxxxivth Psalm, (verse 11.) the Lord is said to be a sun and shield; a sun to give light to his people, and a shield to protect them from the power of darkness. Christ, in the language of the prophet, is the sun of righteousness; who, as the natural sun revives the grass and renews the year, brings on the acceptable year of the Lord, and is the great restorer of all things in the kingdom of grace; shining with the new light of life and immortality to those, who once sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. And the church has warning to receive him under this glorious character. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee! (Isa. lx. 1.) When he was manifested to the eyes of men, he called himself the light of the world, and promised to give the same light to those that follow him. In the absence of Christ as the personal light of the world, his place is supplied by the light of the scripture, which is still a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths. The word of prophecy is as a light shining in a dark place; and as we study by the light of a lamp, so we must give heed to this light, if we would see things to come.

"The moon is used as an emblem of the church, which receives its light from Christ, as the moon from the sun: therefore the renovation of the moon signifies the renovation of the church.—The angels or ruling ministers in the seven churches of Asia (Rev. ii. and iii.) are signified by the seven

stars, because his ministers hold forth the word of life, and their light shines before men in this mortal state, as the stars give light to the world in the night season; of which light Christians in general partake, and are therefore called children

of the light."

Nothing is more grateful to the inhabitants of the East than springs, rivers, and rain: for, as showers rarely fall in their countries, the grass and flowers of the field become consumed by the intolerable heat, unless watered by showers or canals. Hence, flowing springs, copious showers, and nightly dews, which fertilise the fields, furnish them with a variety of pleasing images. Isa. xli. 18. and xxxv. 1. 6, 7. The blessings of the Gospel are delineated under the metaphors of dew, Isa. xxvi. 19. moderate rains, Hos. vi. 3. gentle streams and run-ing waters, Isa. xxvii. 3. and xliv. 3. On the other hand no metaphor is more frequent than that by which sudden and great calamities are expressed under the figure of a deluge of waters. With this metaphor the Hebrews appear to have been extremely familiar, as if it were directly taken from the nature and state of the country. Immediately before their eyes was the river Jordan, which annually overflowed its banks: for the snows of Lebanon and the neighbouring mountains, being melted in the beginning of summer, the waters of the river were often suddenly augmented by the descending torrents. The whole country also, being mountainous, was exposed to frequent floods after the great periodcal tempests of rain.

Horne,

# EVENING.—MARCH 4.

PRAYER AND PRAISE.

How long, O Lord, shall I complain, Like one that seeks his God in vain? Canst thou thy face for ever hide? And I still pray, and be denied?

Shall I for ever be forgot, As one whom thou regardest not? Still shall my soul thine absence mourn And still despair of thy return?

How long shall my poor troubled breast Be with these anxious thoughts opprest? And Satan, my malicious foe, Rejoice to see me sunk so low?

Hear, Lord, and grant me quick relief, Before my death conclude my grief; If thou withhold thy heavenly light, I sleep in everlasting night.

How will the powers of darkness boast, If but one praying soul be lost? But I have trusted in thy grace, And shall again behold thy face.

Whate'er my fears or foes suggest, Thou art my hope, my joy, my rest. My heart shall feel thy love, and raise My cheerful voice to songs of praise.

Watts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER .- LUKE XI.

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying, in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, LORD, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father

which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us this day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I

have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will

rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish

give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?
13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

## PRAYER NOT TO BE A MERE FORM.

"I remember thee upon my bed." When we repeat these words from the sacred writings, when we say we remember the Eternal on our bed, let us ask, if praying to him, we pray in the right way, or pray merely from a habit, in order to comply with Christian usage. Alas! too frequently our prayers are anything but what they ought to be. They are breathed not with fervour and devotion, but repeated almost mechanically. Too many pray to their Creator in the hope that they shall presently receive from his bounty some worldly benefit, which they covet, and do not address themselves at all to him when they feel no immediate want. Some employ themselves in prayer only in those moments of darkened consciousness, in the morning and evening, when they are least awake to the goodness of God, or to a sense of duty, while others direct their attention to mean objects and conventional forms, and pray only with their lips, or with the attitude of the body, and consider their gestures, and a solemn accent at a certain time and place, as all that they need regard. Yet these things are comparatively immaterial. Our Saviour commanded that we should pray with humble resignation at any place. at any time, but always in spirit and in truth; and what does this precept teach, but that our

supplications to our Almighty Parent should be the faithful expositors of the devout feeling and pious sentiments of our minds; the overflowing of grateful hearts, resigned, under all circumstances, to the will of God.

We fail in our duty, and do not worthily worship the Lord with the tongue, while the heart is far Sincere and earnest petitions can alone please the Holy one, who looks not at the person and the form, who heeds not the tone, but who searches the heart. Ah! then, may our prayers to the Omnipotent be this night, and at all times, the pure animated effusions of thankfulness, which confides in his mercy, and desires but to be acceptable in his sight, that the mind may be strengthened and comforted; lifted above the grovelling cares of this world, and anxiously preparing itself for heaven.

When praying to thee, O Lord our God, we desire to address thee with perfect humility, not presumptuously dictating to thee, but assured that thou knowest what will best conduce to our peace and happiness, and that thy mercy is not less sure, not less indulgent, when thou withholdest, than when thou concedest what we may be led to desire.

Thou, in thy wisdom and compassion, wilt not grant the things for which we may solicit and implore thee, but only that which tends to our immortal welfare. It is not thy pleasure always to bestow the blessings which we seek at the time we ask them, but in due season thou wilt give us what is needful. We should, therefore, evermore feel, when we appeal to our God, the consciousness of his presence, and lift up our thoughts to him, in the full belief that he will bestow upon us, through the gracious mediation of our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ, that which is most suited to our condition. We will then call upon the all-seeing one with the penitent humility of the publican who stood afar off. It is only then that our prayers can be worthy of his attention-words-mere words, the Lord of all does not require.-He, who knows our most secret imaginings, without our expressing them, requires not the aid of words to guide his decision. For true devotion all human eloquence is poor, all our most solemn ceremonies insufficient. Great and bountiful Father of the universe, from thy throne in heaven, behold, in this evening hour, our souls desire most earnestly to devote themselves to thee; and they, rather than the mouth, should embody the gratitude with which our bosoms ought to glow. Oh! may the thousands who at

this moment enjoy the blessings which flow from thee, be deeply impressed with a sense of this. which we feel we have no words adequately to express. In eternity, our thankfulness and our praise, we presume to hope, will be worthy of thee, Oh God! and in that hope we desire now to repose—in that hope we would live and die.

#### BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF FAITH.

Faith maketh our work acceptable to God through Christ: but whatsoever is of unbelief is sin: For without faith it is impossible to please him.

Faith giveth us peace and comfort in our souls; but unbelief worketh trouble and tossings, like the restless waves

Faith maketh us see preciousness in Christ; but unbelief sees no form, beauty, or comeliness in him.

By faith we have our life in Christ's fulness; but by unbelief we starve and pine away.

Faith gives us the victory over the law, sin, death, the devil, and all evils; but unbelief layeth us obnoxious to them

Faith will shew us more excellency in things not seen, than in them that are; but unbelief sees more in things that are, than in things that will be hereafter.

Faith makes the ways of God pleasant and admirable; but unbelief maketh them heavy and hard,

By faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessed the land of promise; but because of unbelief, neither Aaron, nor Moses, nor Miriam, could get thither.

By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea; but by unbelief the generality of them perished in the

wilderness.

By faith Gideon did more with three hundred men, and a few empty pitchers, than all the twelve tribes could do. because they believed not God.

By faith Peter walked on the water; but by unbelief he

began to sink.

Thus might many more be added, which, for brevity's sake, I omit; beseeching every one that thinketh he hath a soul to save, or be damned, to take heed of unbelief; lest seeing there is a promise left us of entering into his rest, any of us by unbelief should indeed come short of it.

# MORNING.—MARCH 5.

## PRAISE BE TO GOD.

O praise the Lord in that blest place, From whence his goodness largely flows; Praise him in heaven, where he his face Unveiled in perfect glory shows. Praise him for all the mighty acts

Which he in our behalf hath done; His kindness this return exacts, With which our praise should equal run.

Let the shrill trumpet's warlike voice Make rocks and hills his praise rebound; Praise him with harp's melodious noise, And gentle psalt'ry's silver sound.

Let all that vital breath enjoy, The breath he does to them afford, In just returns of praise employ: Let every creature praise the Lord.

MAN'S TRUST SHOULD BE IN THE ALMIGHTY. LUKE XII.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully : 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I

do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns,

and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not

rich towards God.

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have store house nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his

stature one cubit?

26 If we then be not able to do that thing which is least.

why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more

will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, nor what ye shall

drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these

things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good plea-

sure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

## SUFFERING LEADS TO HAPPINESS.

The protracted agony which our Saviour endured on Mount Calvary, it is awful to contemplate! But the subject is one to which our thoughts should be incessantly turned; it is pregnant with momentous instruction. When we behold the Son of God, having assumed human weakness, groaning in anguish, knowing he suffered for us, it ought to wake in our hearts a lively ambition in all our doings, so far as may be, to resemble him.

And mark his approach to the scene of torture, the theatre of his enduring glory. With all the weakness of humanity upon him, he contem-

plates with thrilling dread the coming moment: he withdraws himself from those who had become his intimate companions, to lift his thoughts in prayer to his eternal Father. Is not this example a sublime lesson for man? As we journey through life, we often find ourselves in painful circumstances, such as the best attention of sympathising friends can, in no considerable degree, relieve. Then, let us remember the course pursued by Jesus, and turn aside to God to solicit his pity and support. Let us retire from the world, and in solitude raise our thoughts in solemn meditation, to our Maker, pour out our whole souls before him, and entreat him to grant us that aid which he, in his infinite wisdom, may see is best adapted to our case. And let us not forget the gospel has preserved for us, even the attitude in which the Saviour presented himself before his God and Father. Humbly sinking on his knees, he bows his devoted head towards that earth which was soon to receive his mortal frame; and this prostration was performed by the august son of the Creator of the world; he to whom all knees were eventually to bend, and before whom the angels themselves must veil their immortal countenances. When such humility marked his appeal, shall we deem it too much to kneel in the dust before our common Father. We ourselves are but dust, yet has our earth-born pride thought it too much so to stoop before him who is Almighty.

Not once alone did Christ pray. Repeatedly did he renew his suit, nor did he desist from his supplication till his petition was answered. Let this teach us that perseverance and confidence must be ours when we pray; and though not immediately, we shall, in the end, be heard as our Saviour was. Let us not omit to mark, in the midst of his distress, how full, how entire was the resignation of our Redeemer. Great was his affliction, dreadful the persecution that awaited him; yet, while shrinking from it with a mortal dread, he was still content to drink the bitter cup, if such God's pleasure. Anxiously desiring that this consummation of sorrow might be spared, "Not mine, but thy will, O God, be done," was the sentiment breathed from his lips. What sorrow, what distress do we know that can be compared with that which he had to meet? Yet full often have we been disconsolate, and repined under the dispensations of our Creator. When we remember this, must we not ever feel shame while looking unto him whom we profess to folpath of duty.

low? May that Saviour now in glory, the meek, the enduring, yet the brave, the resigned Jesus, fill our hearts with such courage and pious resignation, as will enable us, as he did, to submit with calmness to the decrees of God, however terrible they may appear. Let us fix our eyes on the cross when our courage fails, and we seem about to sink in the combat with sin. When we feel ourselves listless and indifferent about doing good, may we wisely refresh our minds by recalling the unceasing efforts which he made to relieve the wretched, and, admonished by him, resume the

Nor is this all that we are taught by the affecting spectacle now before our eyes. The glorious result of his mighty efforts in the cause of unhappy sinners, should in us inspire hope that we, by patience, may eventually triumph. We will rest persuaded, that though our weak comprehension cannot discern the immediate object which God has in view, that which he wills must be for the best, and we shall finally rejoice in what, at the moment, we are tempted to deplore. This should be the settled conviction of our hearts, and this should give us that peace which the world cannot take away. Through suffering, Jesus Christ our Lord has reached bliss, and secured our eternal happiness; his prayers have saved us from endless woe, and the joy he now proves, through his merciful perseverance, will at last be ours, and the angels that imparted strength and comfort to him, will, in due season, minister to us.

Great is the encouragement to the sincere believer, drawn from the example afforded of the sufferings of our illustrious captain. It shall be our anxious wish to treasure them up in our hearts, and daily to offer the homage of our praise and gratitude, for all that he suffered in the garden, for all that he endured on the cross to purchase man's salvation.

#### RELIGIOUS HABITS NOT IRKSOME.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progress research, we find all the knots made plain, and the rough we are lesmooth. Now the spirit of grace is like a new soul within him, and he hath new appetites and new pleasures, who is the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of religion are delicious: when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, but are represeded with a penitential sorrow and speedy amendment: when we do actions of virtue quickly, frequently, and with a ceight, then we have grown in grace, in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin; they dare not omit their are of prayer, and they are restless in their spirits till they have done; but they go to it as to exception; they stay from

it as long as they can, and they drive, like Pharaoh's chariots. with the wheels off, sadly and heavily; and, besides that such persons have reserved to themselves the best part of the sacrifice, and do not give their will to God; they do not love him with all their heart; they are also soonest tempted to retire and fall off. Sextius Romanus resigned the honours and offices of the city, and betook himself to the severity of a philosophical life; but when his unusual diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propositions smart, and that which was fine in discourse at a symposaic or an academical dinner, began to sit uneasily on him in the practice, he so despaired that he had like to have cast himself into the sea to appease the labours of his religion; because he never had gone further than to think it a fine thing to be a wise man: he would commend it, but he was loath to pay for it at the price that God and the philosopher set on it. But he that is 'grown in grace,' and hath made religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new man: he rests in religion, and comforts his sorrows with thinking of his prayers; and in all crosses of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when he list, for he cares not so he may serve God; and if you make him poor here, he is rich there; and he counts that to be his proper service, his work, his recreation, and reward.

Jeremy Taylor.

# EVENING.-MARCH 5.

GOD'S WONDROUS DEEDS.

My God, my King, thy various praise Demands thanksgiving all my days; Oh, let thy grace employ my tongue, Till death and glory raise the song.

Grant, Lord, that every hour may bear Some thankful tribute to thine ear; And every setting sun may see New works of duty done for thee.

Thy faithfulness endures the same; Thy bounty flows an endless stream: Thy mercy swift, thine anger slow, But dreadful to the stubborn foe.

And who can speak thy wondrous deeds! Thy greatness all our thoughts exceeds, Vast and unsearchable thy ways! Vast and immortal be thy praise.

Golden Treasury.

## UNDERSTANDING ASKED FROM GOD. PSALM CXIX.

73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

75 I know, O LOED, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

78 Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.
79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that

have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be found in thy statutes: that I be not ashamed.

81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.

82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after

86 All thy commandments are faithful; they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I for-

sook not thy precepts.

88 Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

FAITH DISPERSES THE CLOUDS OF LIFE.

For many an hour, low in the sky
I've seen a cloud of purple hue,
And on it bent a pensive eye,
Unmindful of the ambient blue,
'Till fancy saw the fettered storm,
At night break from its "airy bars,"
And spread abroad that slumbering form,
To hide the glory of the stars!

But now as day speeds to a close,
And shoots the sun his parting rays,
Ere their full strength to dimness grows,
Like memories of youthful days,
How changed that cloud! its depth is gone,
The hidden light streams from each fold,
As putting now its jewels on,
It binds its darkness round with gold!

Thus oft will fancy's eye discern,
Upon my life's expanded sky,
A gathering cloud, and tearful turn
From beauties which about it lie,
To gaze on gloom until the sight
Throws on my heart the earth-bound shade,
That soon is nourished to a night
In which life's brightest objects fade.

But when again sweet Faith returns,
And paints, Oh God! thy love to me,
How soon her piercing eye discerns,
The light that fancy ne'er could see—
Light which is born in heaven to spring
Effulgent from the clouds of fear,
To guide my soul on upward wing
Through shadows which surround it here.

A. D. F. Randolph.

#### MAN A WONDER TO HIMSELF.

"I will praise thee, for I am wonderfully made."
How wonderfully, to use the words of David we are made, must be deeply felt, if for a moment, we contemplate the blood diffused through our exquisitely constructed mortal frame, even as the air is

through the world. Our blood has often caused us uneasiness. This evening we would fain make it the theme of meditation, not without a hope of spiritually edifying our minds by occupying them with it. How miraculous does it appear! How astonishing its functions! About twenty-eight pounds of blood perform, within the space of an hour, their circulation no fewer than twenty-three times through all parts of our bodies, and stream through the heart, which, for this purpose, opens and contracts itself, within the same period, more than four thousand times, and by means of very minute veins, the blood in our bodies passes through a length of a hundred and twenty-five Who is able to comprehend this, and who can look at this amazing truth without feeling shame for the dull insensibility which so seldom turns its attention to that which is so truly miraculous? While the pulse of a child is beating in every minute about one hundred and fifteen times, that of an aged person beats seventy-five; the pulse of a grown person in good health, and in a hot country, will give one hundred and twenty, but in our climate, after midnight, it reaches but sixty-five, and from the morning towards evening it gradually advances towards eighty. It therefore follows that an average of four millions and a half of beats are given in one month. Dare we ask ourselves, of these how many are felt to be in the service of the Most High? We fear to answer. Yet is not every single beat of importance? Not more time than is consumed by one single vibration of the pulse, does it require for man to die!

Of the artificial preparation of the nature and all the uses of the blood, we are about as well informed, as we are of what may exist in the depths of the ocean; that is to say, though modern science has accomplished many ingenious experiments, our knowledge is at present very imperfect. To us it is a mystery how the same kind of blood can for years be produced from so many various kinds of food and drink. At this we marvel; but knowest thou, O helpless man! whose hand has prepared it for thee-who has put it in motion through thy veins, thy heart, and thy lungs: who produces from it all the other humidities of the body, by means of delicately constructed glands, and who has ordained that, in the space of ten years, thy whole system shall be renewed by the action of the blood? Who is it gives nourishment and warmth to thy whole frame? who inspires it with life and motion by means of the wonderful blood, and who, but with equal care,

provided that this prime source of vitality shall become, in due season, the gradual cause of thy

decay, and eventually of thy death?

Nor has all that is wonderful in connection with the blood yet been touched upon. Who orders that, at this advanced hour of the evening, our blood should flow faintly in the smaller veins, and thus prepare us for sleep, while in the larger vessels it gains a quicker circulation. Who, after a period of about five hours, commands it to circulate more rapidly in all parts of the frame, to increase the perspiration, and to replace the absorbed humidities. What is the cause of this rising and falling tide in our persons?

With unaffected awe and admiration, we contemplate these wonders of thy mighty hand. Oh, all-wise and Almighty Father! in these we mark the traces of thy powerful and mysterious agency. In the deepest humility we adore the wisdom which formed us as we are, and endued us with vital powers capable of resisting all the toils and exertions incidental to active life for a series of years. Lord of all! we desire that all our faculties may be devoted to thy service; that we may praise thee with our bodies -- and not only with our bodies, but with our spirits, those spirits which thou hast bestowed, partaking of thine own immortality. Yes, this shall be our aim, and, looking at the wonders presented to our mortal observation, we will exultingly press forward to that eternal state, in which our eager desire for more intimate knowledge of thy works may be fully satisfied, and where it may be ours eternally to glorify the mighty author of all that we behold, of all that can exist.

## MORNING.-MARCH 6.

GOD'S LOVE ALL-SUFFICIENT.

To thee, my God, I daily sigh, But not for golden stores; Nor covet I the brightest gems On the rich eastern shores.

Nor pleasure's soft enticing charms
My fond desires allure;
Far greater things than earth can yield,
My wishes would secure.

Those blissful, those transporting smiles
That brighten heaven above;
The boundless riches of thy grace,
And treasures of thy love.

Golden Treasury.

CHRISTIANS NOT TO BE ASHAMED .- MARK VIII.

27 ¶ And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say,

Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ,

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him,

and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow

ne.

35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

orld, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation: of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

### THE PLANT OF PEACE.

Henry Martyn, grieved at the little success of his missionary labours, and mourning over the corrupt heart of man, one day, in climbing a ravine, observed a peculiarly lustrous plant shining amid the rugged scenery, which so reminded him of the glorious "plant of renown," that peace was imparted mightily to his soul.

Weary, and sinking 'neath the blaze
Of India's burning sun,
The holy man, beneath its rays,
The rocky summit won.
A herald of the cross was he,
From Britain's favoured isle.
Bringing salvation's offers free
To sinners poor and vile.

Lonely and sad he ponder'd o'er
The little he had done:
A mighty work seem'd him before—
His strength was almost gone.
His heart within was dark and drear;
No ray of comfort nigh,
Nor did one star of hope appear
Amid his darken'd sky.

Gleaming beneath the sunny glow,
There glittered fair and bright,
Above the streamlets murmuring flow,
A sparkling gem of light.

This plant of beauty sweetly bloom'd, Gladdening the lonely wild; And though around rude nature gloom'd Its dazzling radiance smil'd.

The mourning pilgrim's eye it caught;
His night was turned to day:
With heavenly joy that heart was fraught—
His grief soon passed away.
An emblem fair it seemed to him,
Of "Sharon's lovely rose:"
In this world's desert, dark and dim,
So bright its lustre glows.

Refreshed and strengthen'd by the sight,
He left that silent glen;
O, what a flood of glorious light
Dwelt in his bosom then!
Thus, Saviour, let thy welcome sight
Dispel our grief and fear:
Thy presence cheers life's stormy night—
'Tis bright when thou art near.

Anon.

# ADMONISH, BUT BE SLOW TO CENSURE OTHERS.

"And they led him away to crucify him." So writes St. Matthew in his history of the sufferings of Jesus. Such, indeed, was the astonishing truth. The Jews really crucified him, who, more than any being ever seen in the world, deserved to be sincerely loved, honoured, and rewarded. They crucified Jesus, the Son of God! How mournful was the scene, in which he was the principal actor. We see him doomed to experience the most excruciating torments; mocked and outraged in every possible way, and that for promulgating truths of the highest importance to all the human race, and after proving his divinity by miracles the most extraordinary that had ever been witnessed since the creation of the world. painful must it have been to him, with those feelings which belonged to his mortal incarnation, to find himself not only unacknowledged as a messenger from heaven, but an object of scorn, hatred, and persecution. Scarcely would we believe it possible that a personage so virtuous, so illustrious, could be thus unworthily treated, had not affecting cases occurred even in our own time, of similar blindness and incredulity, where the Saviour was concerned on the part of our fellowmen. Even now that he is in glory, unhappily men too frequently see the blessed Jesus overwhelmed with obloquy and neglect by the world, as during the days of his terrestrial life: is true that in his own person he is above worldly malice. Ignominy and torture cannot approach him, but still his great and devout labours are treated with contumely, and his name is pronounced with indifference, with anything but those lively emotions of love and gratitude, which it ought to call forth, wherever it is heard in the Christian world.

The true and sincere followers of a crucified Saviour, cannot but behold with grief, the cross, the sacred symbol of his triumph and our salvation, treated as foolishness, and rendered by unbelief a stumbling block to the wise of this world, who, in their mournful blindness and earthborn arrogance, scorn the Redeemer in the belief that they need not redemption. Let us not only think for ourselves, but endeavour to induce our brethren to reflect within themselves, how important to our race is that gospel which the infidel derides; and how vast the benefit conferred by that cross, which he weakly despises, on all mankind. In doing this, let us not pass the bounds of moderation. Let us not rudely condemn, nor too sternly affect the judge; for we cannot penetrate the hearts of others, to decide with certainty whether they are guilty, or whether they have latent feelings which exonerate from the charge which may too rashly be brought against them. All the secrets of another's bosom we cannot know; and in the case of an erring brother, we have not the means of discerning what it was that seduced him from Jesus. Whether he stands or falls, his case must eventually be judged by the Lord of all. We must, however, look carefully to ourselves, that we may not be tempted to despise the Saviour; and if we unhappily should find ourselves associated with scorners, let this indifference be to us a warning, not an example. But what if we have despised him already? This we have done. Too frequently has our faith lost its firmness and consistency, and we have felt persuaded that all our sins might be expiated by the good deeds we proposed to perform. Yes; we have dared to think that, by our own actions, we might acquire a just claim on the mercy of the Almighty. How many times have we prided ourselves on these, not perceiving that all good deeds proceed from the holy spirit of God!

Nor is this all. Have we not weakly stood in awe of man, and doing so, braved the anger of his Creator? Have we not been ashamed of the gospel, and even by our conduct, denied its truth? This we have done, and our minds, prone to sin, have weakly called in question the pledge of our salvation. Conscious that we ourselves have thus wandered from the right path, let us not be

rash in judging others severely, when we see them renounce the Redeemer, led astray by fatal delusions, betrayed by the vanity of the heart, and even declining to acknowledge that mercy by which Jesus Christ has been offered to them. It is not for us to condemn, but to pity. The wanderers it shall be our care to reclaim, while we must vigilantly guard against falling into the same dreadful snare. This, O Saviour of man! divine Jesus! we now raise our voices to promise, from the conviction of our hearts, we promise it joyfully. Of the gospel, bound up with thy holy precepts, we will never feel ashamed, but deem it the highest honour we can attain, to proclaim ourselves Christians, and glorify thy name. Such are now our true sentiments: O be it thine to confirm us in them, and guard our hearts, lest evil council should prevail over them, and draw them from the course which they ought to pursue, that of perfect devotion to thy truth till death. Though we should see, on the right and on the left, multitudes fall from thee; though others faintly lose their zeal, and fall away from thee; inspire us with courage to profess thee even before thy enemies, and boast ourselves really thine. In thy awful presence, O Lord! we now solemnly renew this vow. Great has been thy forbearance, vast thy bounty, in the days that are past. These we desire ever to bear in mind, that the resolve now breathed may, to the end of our lives, be faithfully kept.

# EVENING.—MARCH 6.

EFFECT OF THE ATONEMENT.

Why does your face, ye humble souls, Those mournful colours wear? What doubts are these that waste your faith, And nourish your despair?

What though your numerous sins exceed The stars that fill the skies! And, aiming at the eternal throne, Like pointed mountains rise!

See here an endless ocean flows Of never failing grace; Behold a dying Saviour's veins The sacred flood increase!

It rises high and drowns the hills, Has neither shore nor bound! Now, if we search to find our sins, Our the can never be found.

Golden Treasury.

THE GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED TO ALL. MARK XVI.

1 When the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted; ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified; he is risen; he is not here: he held the place where they laid him.

behold the place where they laid him.
7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

9 ¶ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 ¶ Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

# TRIUMPH OF CHRIST'S CHURCH FROM AGE TO AGE.

"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against my church." So spoke Christ in reference to that faith which he established on earth, and from that period up to the present day, all that has occurred has served but to prove the truth of the important declaration. The powerful of the world, moved by blind animosity, have openly and secretly, by force and by cunning, strove against Jesus and his doctrine, but in vain. All their hostility proved abortive. They have passed away, they have sunk into dust, and nothing survives of them but the memory of their disgrace, of the defeat of their impotent malice, and Jesus Christ "sitteth on his throne, at the right hand of his Father," and smiles at the rage of his enemies, to whom he will one day speak in thunder. Inscrutable are the ways of providence. Could the emperor Julian have foreseen that the

Saviour of the world, whom he deserted, would be worshipped by all the most civilized nations of the world after the lapse of fifteen centuries, he would hardly have committed the grave error of preferring senseless paganism to the divine precepts of the Son of God. There will always be godless people in the world; but a period will arrive when the name of an infidel will be a stigma on its wearer, because the divine character of the Christian doctrine will be incomprehensible only to the mad, the most obstinate, or the most incapable of mankind. If we take into our consideration that there are scarcely any weapons by which the doctrine of Christ has not already been assailed, but assailed in vain, we may with reason pity those who have lost so much time, who have imposed upon themselves so much labour in the cause of the evil one, as many ingenious scoffers have done, only to experience ignominious defeat. The efforts which could not succeed in the first and the fourth century, are less likely to be more fortunate now. Should any objection be raised against the history of Jesus Christ, it ought to have been pressed while ocular witnesses of many of the scenes narrated, authentic documents and faithful old traditions, were still in existence.

But it is to be remembered, that in those times Jews and heathens did not remain silent. Their virulent opposition is well known—the unquestionable proofs of it are still extant. The miracles of Jesus, which they could not deny to have been performed, they ascribed to sorcery, and referred to the names of others who were said to have done the like. The disappearance of the body of Christ from the grave, which could not be questioned, they pretended had been secretly effected by his disciples, who had stolen the corpse, though due care had been taken that the tomb should not be left unguarded. Other objections had been urged too frivolous to deserve serious notice. Our children now, if told that extraordinary things were effected by sorcery, would ask, with wondering incredulity, what is sorcery? It is known that by such means no such prodigies could be wrought. And how was it possible, we might ask, for the disciples, wishing to possess the remains of their beloved Master, to overpower the Roman guard, and having done this, to remain among the Jews and Romans with impunity. Feeling all the extravagance of such a supposition, may not the Christian be justified in exclaiming, "Poor infidel, thou wouldst not be inclined to entertain such doubts if thou wert disposed to live

a life like that which our Redeemer required. Thy system, if a series of vague indeterminate imaginings deserve to be so called, has been erected by persons of vicious habits, and has been recommended by blasphemers, in themselves too contemptible to claim serious attention from reflecting men." Not for what they suggest will we abandon the proved doctrines and holy precepts of our Saviour and his apostles.

Great founder and author of our faith! within our hearts thy sacred voice shall not be overpowered. We will ever rejoice to be numbered among thy followers. Our faith is fortified by seeing that they who own thee lead a virtuous life, while those who persecute the Christian name, abandon themselves to follies the most degrading, to vices the most appalling. How striking, how sublime a proof is thus afforded of thy divine nature! Preserve, O Lord, our hearts, so that we may fear and reverence thy name. Thou to us art all in all. To whom, O God, can we fly, but to thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

THE CHRISTIAN MUST, IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, LOOK TO JESUS.

Let us all be heliotropes (if I may use the expression) to the Sun of Righteousness. Let our passions rise and fall; take this course or that, as his word determines, as his holy example guides. Let us be so accommodated, both to his commanding and providential will, as the wax is turned to the imprinted seal; or, as the aspect of this enamoured flower, to the splendid star, which creates our day.

In every enjoyment, O thou watchful Christian, look unto Jesus; receive it as proceeding from his love, and purchased by his agonies. In every tribulation look unto Jesus, mark his gracious hand managing the scourge, or mingling the bitter cup, attempering it to a proper degree of severity, adjusting the time of its continuance, and ready to make these seeming disasters productive of real good. In every infirmity and failing, look unto Jesus, thy merciful high priest, pleading his atoning blood, and making intercession for transgressors. In every prayer look unto Jesus, thy prevailing advocate, recommending thy devotions, and "bearing the iniquity of thy holy things!" In every temptation look unto Jesus, the author of thy strength, and captain of thy salva-tion, who alone is able to lift up the hands which hang down, to invigorate the enfeebled knees, and make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies. But especially, when the hour of thy departure approaches, when "thy flesh and thy heart fail," when all the springs of life are irreparably breaking, then look unto Jesus with a believing eye. Like expiring Stephen, behold him standing at the right hand of God, on purpose to succour his people in this their last extremity. Yes, my Christian friend, when thy journey through life is finished, and thou art arrived on the very verge of mortality, when thou art just launched out into the invisible world, and all before thee is vast eternity; then, O then, be sure to look steadfastly unto Jesus! "See by faith the Lord's Christ." View him as the only way to the everlasting mansions, as the only door to the abodes of bliss. Hervey.

# MORNING .- MARCH 7

AID FROM GOD'S WORD IMPLORED.

With favour, Lord, look down on me Who thy relief implore; As thou art wont to visit those Who thy blest name adore.

Directed by thy heavenly word Let all my footsteps be; Nor wickedness of any kind Dominion have o'er me.

Release, entirely set me free,
From persecuting hands,
That unmolested I may learn,
And practise thy commands.

On me, devoted to thy fear,

Lord, make thy face to shine;

Thy statutes both to know and keep,

My heart with zeal incline.

#### CHRIST CRUCIFIED. JOHN XIX.

17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:
18 Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 ¶ And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING

OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was night to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garment, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary

Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

- 28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.
- 29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.
- 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

#### DIE LIKE JESUS.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," exclaimed our Saviour in his dving moments on the cross. Oh! that when our last hour shall arrive, it may be our blessed lot to die with the same perfect resignation to the will of the eternal, which in this prayer is so finely imaged by the language of our blessed Redeemer, while suffering as a man for the sins of men; that we may be able, with like confidence, to commit our spirits into the hands of the great God, by whom they were originally called into being. If such be really our anxious wish, we must keep a strict watch over our hearts, that we may not be misled, and drawn into the paths of sin. The warnings of conscience must not pass unheeded; they must receive our best attention, that they may not rise against us in the shape of awful self-reproach in the hour of death. We will exert ourselves betimes, to do good while yet it is day for us, before "the night comes in which no man can work," and finds us engaged in the pursuits of frivolity, or slumbering in supine indifference. To Christ we trust we belong, and through him we must endeavour to work our salvation with fear and Let this be our constant object trembling. through life, and then, in that day when the Lord calls us to himself, we shall be able to die like our great leader, sustained by the cheering and comforting thought, that a crucified Saviour has, by his death upon the cross, purchased for us the grace of God. He has ransomed us—he has paid the fearful debt which we, as offending sinners, had incurred, and gained from his eternal Father. for us, the beatitude of heaven. Thanks be to thee, Lord of all! who has gained us the victory over death, and grace through Jesus Christ.

"It is finished," was the last sigh of our Saviour, when be bowed his expiring head. His meaning in that memorably interesting moment was, that the great work of redemption was then perfected—finished. The sacrifice which he had consented to make for the sins of the world, was completed. By that he had won that glorious victory over the powers of darkness. One day we trust to be able to repeat his words, "It is finished," when our last hour is at hand, and we about to be numbered with those who die in the Lord.

While God still allows us to survive, it must be our most earnest endeavour so to regulate all our actions, that we may be truly said to live in the Lord, anxious to follow him in faith and in love. So shall it be our felicity to follow him in dying, with calm resignation, and pass like him to eternal happiness. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," will then be the exclamation which each of us will secretly breathe when about to depart. We shall die in peace; our memory will be a blessing to those who remain behind, and our names will be repeated with tenderness and affection by the friends the great Creator thought fit to confide to our care and our love.

Looking forward to that moment when all things on earth must fade from our view, O! how desirable it is, that we should not have to deplore any wasted days of our lives, days given up to sin and to the dread transgressions and misdeeds of a hardened unrepentant heart. We humbly implore thy assistance, O God! our Creator and Father. that we may be faithful to the end. Purify our bosoms, strengthen our good resolutions, and let us feel animated by thy holy spirit. We may not cease to sigh for our offences against heaven, we may not cease to watch and pray while here we remain. Till the days of our earthly pilgrimage are finished, these exercises of a contrite spirit must be incessantly repeated. At all times we ought to keep before us our divine Redeemer, in his obedience to his eternal Father, in his faithfulness, and finally in the consummation of his destiny. In the perplexities and cares of this troubled scene, let us never forget that we belong to him who has brought to the world, light, life, and the assurance of an imperishable being hereafter; and who has promised that the pious and the holy shall be richly rewarded in heaven for all the sufferings they may know while here. With confidence, gratitude, and love, we will therefore pursue our way in a cheerful spirit, encountering those trials which must be encountered on the road to immortal happiness, with firmness not to be conquered.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIALS.

Suppose, Christian, the furnace be seven times hotter; it is but to make you seven times better .- Fiery trials make golden

I never had, in all my life, so great an inlet into the word of God, as now [viz. as during his twelve years imprisonment]: insomuch that I have often said, "Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort's sake."

When Abraham's knife was at Isaac's throat, God provided a ram, for a burnt offering. And, in all trouble the Lord will either provide deliverance for his people, or provide strength Dr. Gifford. for them to bear it.

It may be, thou art a poor, trembling soul: thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong; thy corruptions

great, and thy strength little; so that in thy opinion, they rather gain ground on thy grace, than give ground to it : yea, every now and then, thou art apt to dread, that thou shalt, one day, be cast as a wreck on the Devil's shore. And yet to this day, thy grace lives. [Thou art still longing, panting, desiring, wishing, and groaning for God.] Is it not worth while to turn and see this strange sight? A broken ship, with masts and hull rent and torn, full of leaks, yet towed along by almighty power, through a tempestuous sea (not tempestuous only, but thick set with armadas of sins, afflictions, doubts, and temptations), safely into God's harbour! To see a poor rush candle, in the face of the boisterous winds, and liable to the frequent dashes of quenching waves, yet not blown out! In a word, to see a weak stripling in grace held up in God's arms, until all enemies are under his feet! This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Gurnall.

# EVENING .- MARCH 7.

#### APPEAL TO GOD.

Lord, hear the voice of my complaint, Accept my secret prayer ; To thee alone, my king, my God, Will I for help repair.

Thou in the morn my voice shalt hear; And with the dawning day To thee devoutly I'll look up, To thee devoutly pray.

And when thy boundless grace shall me To thy loved courts restore, On thee I'll fix my longing eyes, And humbly thee adore.

Drummond's Collection.

#### PSALM XXXIII.

1 Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings,

5 He that loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. 6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made: and

all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in store-houses,

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

10 The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

11 The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. 14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all

the inhabitants of the earth. 15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

17 An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon upon them that

fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.

#### A CHRISTIAN EASY IN DEATH.

As precious gums are not for lasting fire, They but perfume the temple and expire; So was she soon exhal'd, and vanished hence, A short sweet odour of a vast expense. She vanished, we can scarcely say she died; For but a Now did heaven and earth divide: She passed serenely with a single breath; This moment perfect health, the next was death: One sigh did her eternal bliss assure; So little penance needs when souls are almost pure. As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue, Or, one dream passed, we slide into a new; So close they follow, such wild order keep, We think ourselves awake, and are asleep; So softly death succeeded life in her, So did but dream of heaven, and she was there.

No pain she suffer'd, nor expired with noise, Her soul was whispered out with God's still voice. As an old friend is beckon'd to a feast, And treated like a long familiar guest, He took her as he found, but found her so, As one in hourly readiness to go; E'en on that day, in all her trim prepar'd, As early notice, she from heaven had heard. And some descending courier from above Had given her timely warning to remove, Or counselled her to dress the nuptial room, For on that night the bridegroom was to come. He kept his hour, and found her where she lay, Clothed all in white, the liv'ry of the day. Scarce had she sinned in thought, or word, or act, Unless omissions were to pass for fact, That hardly death a consequence could draw, To make her liable to nature's law. And that she dy'd, we only have to show The mortal part of her she left below: The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went, Look'd like translation through the firmament, Or like the fiery car on the third errand sent.

Dryden.

THE CHRISTIAN, ALWAYS SEEN BY THE ALMIGHTY, ON HIM MAY SECURELY DEPEND.

"If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Every where, O Lord! and at all times, thou art near to us. Even at this moment, when the light of day is withdrawn, and profound silence reigns, thou art still with us. We are never really alone, never unobserved by thee, in whom we live and move, and have our being. O God, our eternal Father! thou art present equally where the judgment of death is signed in the hall of the proud monarch, as with the trembling prisoner in his cell, against whom that awful

sentence is awarded. Of no living being is a single hair unknown to thee, and not the most secret thought can be hidden from thy all-seeing

The truth is pregnant with important consequences, that I am always in the presence of God. and that through all eternity I can never be left to myself. Air is indispensable to the vitality of all created beings possessing a tangible frame, as also is light to render them visible, but each particle of air and every ray of light is provided by the hand of God. Every wicked deed, every unholy thought, every polluting image which would suggest itself to my soul from the various allurements and temptations which I may encounter, is so distinctly seen by the Omniscient. that it cannot be forgotten in the lapse of years. Remember then, O weak and self-deceiving heart. that the guilty actions successfully concealed from men, which would pale thy cheek, or cause it to exhibit the blush of shame were they disclosed to thy mortal friends, are known above, are clearly beheld from heaven. From the eyes of the judgment of thy fellow-creatures on earth, it is possible for thee to escape, but ultimately of what avail is that, since thou must appear before the throne of God to answer for thy conduct in life? This thought deserves to be most carefully entertained.

Terrible and alarming is the Omnipresence of God to the wicked; it is not less comforting and cheering to the good. To him who fears the Lord, the steadfast conviction that God is near, makes him superior to persecution and misfortune, and lifts him above the grovelling and degrading terrors which dread of what men could do might otherwise inspire. The same good and infinite being, who accepts as a welcome offering the joyful outpourings of the angels in heaven, hears also the sighs of men. To him the calumnies circulated by our adversaries, and the designs formed against our peace, are all known; and his potent arm can turn away or overthrow them, if they are opposed to his designs. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, he is with us, and his right hand is our unerring guide and sure protector. While the wicked flee where no man can pursue, the righteous are bold

in their innocence.

Mighty and Omnipotent God, now henceforth and for ever: Lord of all! how could we think of hiding our imaginings for one moment from thy view? The most secret recesses of our hearts to thee are known. Our last thoughts in this world, as those which will be our first in the world to come, are already before thee. Forget thou canst not, but forgive thou canst; and O! let our transgressions be brought against us no more. In our weakness we are too ready to forget them, instead of supplicating our Creator to pardon them. We now devoutly entreat forgiveness for all the sins we have committed against thy holy word—we desire to throw ourselves into the arms of our Saviour Jesus; and when we do this, we experience a blessed calm, and feel that we can go serenely to rest.

"Indifferent in our choice to sleep or die," whether we recline here before thee on our couch, or are stretched in the grave, sinners as we are, we confidently trust, Almighty God, that through the merits of our Saviour, we are recon-

ciled to thee.

# MORNING .- MARCH 8.

THE AGED CHRISTIAN'S SONG.

God of my childhood and my youth, The guide of all my days. I have declared thy heavenly truth, And told thy wondrous ways,

Wilt thou forsake my hoary hairs, And leave my fainting heart? Who shall sustain my sinking years, If God my strength depart?

Let me thy power and truth proclaim, To the surviving age ; And leave a savour of thy name When I shall quit the stage.

The land of silence and of death, Attends my next remove, O may these poor remains of breath, Teach the wide world thy love!

Watts.

#### GOD PROTECTS THE HUMBLE .- JOB XXII.

12 Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!

13 And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge

through the dark cloud?

14 Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

15 Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have

16 Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with the flood.

17 Which said unto God, depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?

18 Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

19 The righteous see it, and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn.

20 Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.

21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee,

22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.

23 If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

24 Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

25 Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.

26 For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shall lift up thy face unto God.

27 Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shalt hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.

#### CHRIST MUST BE OUR GREAT EXAMPLE.

"Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." So speaks the apostle Peter of Christ, but to this he adds, "That we, being dead in sins, should live to righteousness!" But how could this be effected; how, O gracious Lord and Saviour! could we be redeemed, if we did not allow ourselves to be sanctified by thy merits, and thus the object of thy great mission fulfilled in our persons. We must do our utmost to further the glorious object of his coming, by effecting our own sincere conversion, and applying ourselves, as he did, with unmeasured zeal to do good. With this aim in view, where can we find a guide so surely to be relied upon, so easily to be found, as the life of the Saviour? To copy the example which he has left for us, to tread in his footsteps, must be our constant endeavour; and can we contemplate these but with rapturous admiration and awful reverence? While we look up to him, we feel our minds strengthened, our bosoms glow with holy enthusiasm. To cleanse our hearts, and lift ourselves above the mean habits which grow upon us living in a sinful world, at once to repel hateful selfishness and ridiculous egotism, we have but to fix our thoughts on the purely fraternal love manifested by our Lord, while on earth. His faithful adh ence to duty ought to be borne in mind when we feel our hearts tempted to waver; his benign meekness when angry feelings threaten to carry us away to sin-his indulgent mercy when the errors and outrages of our fellow-creatures exhaust our patience; his cheerful perseverance when the labour of our vocations press severely upon us;

his firmness and submission when the ills of life seem more than we can bear, and we feel pusillanimously disposed to yield to dismay; and his confidence in God when apprehension is resolving itself into despair. His great example, his glorious course, let us love to dwell upon; let us seek to inform our minds and edify our hearts. Such should be our study through life, and in that awful moment, when the thought and the prospect of death is full before us, still let our souls be occupied with the image of a crucified Redeemer; and recollecting the enduring patience with which he suffered unnumbered wrongs for us, be it our firm resolution to submit as he submitted; to be obedient and resigned to the last; and pass from this world in the confident hope that we are hastening to the presence of a beloved father, on whose love we may depend with the fullest reliance. Great and sublime is the model placed before our eyes. Behold the Son of God bearing the sins of the world on the cross. Can we look up to him, and promise that we shall have sufficient courage, strength, and perseverance, to undergo, without failing in our duty, such trials as our faith may be exposed to in our passage through this life? We may justly suspect that it is but too probable we shall be found wanting when subjected to the fiery ordeal. So often we have wavered, so often we have strayed from the right path, and so often have our constancy and courage failed, while we have been content to abandon sacred cares for indolent repose, that we are ill assured such failures will not be repeated. A retrospect of the past can afford but little comfort. It cannot strengthen our determination by imparting new courage from a view of former triumphs. Nor can we with certainty know, that greater trials than any we have yet experienced, are not reserved for the closing scenes of our career. It may be the pleasure of the Almighty that we should yet drink of a very bitter draught, and have to mourn for suffering the most severe.

When chilling fears like these come over us, does not the Saviour's voice seem to whisper to us, "Do not despond; be of good cheer and follow me. Have faith and be of good courage!" He continues to revive the hopes of his disheartened followers. So exhorted, let us banish from our bosoms all vain alarms, which amount to something like a guilty refusal of confidence to our gracious father, and an absence of proper gratitude for the bounty of our Redeemer. We must lift ourselves above the cares of the moment

to exult in the joyfulness of faith, fortified by the heart-gladdening thought that God himself is our guide. To him, let us humbly, but without despondency, address our earnest supplications. Our prayers, breathed in a proper spirit, will not remain unheard. Let thy end, O Saviour of the world, comfort and sustain us in the last awful struggles of nature; and, as thou thyself hast conquered death, grant that we may rise superior to the dread of his coming, and finally depart filled with joyful hope, and sincere thankfulness for the peace thy excruciating sufferings have purchased for mankind.

## FOLLY OF WORLDLY ANXIETIES.

How fruitless is anxiety for worldly things! My friend, the late Mr. Paul Greenwood, when on his death-bed (about two years ago), was under some distress, as to his mother, to whose support he used to contribute.—The good man was no sooner dead, than a messenger was dispatched to let his mother know it. The messenger of the son's death was met, on the road, by another messenger, who was coming to bring the news of the mother's death to her son.—Thus, she lived not to miss her son's kindness; but both mother and son met in heaven together, about the same time.

#### COMFORT IN DEATH.

Dr. Oliver, the celebrated Bath physician, had been a very inveterate infidel, till within a short time before his death. In his last sickness, the arrows of spiritual conviction stuck fast in him. Lady Huntingdon never saw a person more thoroughly humbled, distrest, and broken in heart. Coming to him about two days before he died, he lamented, not only his own past infidelity, but the zeal and success with which he had endeavoured to infect the minds of others. "O that I could undo the mischief I have done! I was more ardent," said he, "to poison people with the principles of irreligion and unbelief, than almost any Christian can be to spread the doctrines of Christ."—Cheer up (answered Lady Huntingdon); Jesus, the great sacrifice for sin, atoned for the sins of the second table as well as for those of the first.—" God," replied he, "certainly can, but I fear he never will, pardon such a wretch as I .- "You may fear it at present, rejoined she; but you and I shall most certainly meet each other in heaven .-The doctor then said, "O woman, great is thy faith. My faith cannot believe that I shall ever be there.'

Soon after, the Lord lifted up the light of his countenance on Dr. Oliver's soul. He lay, the rest of his time, triumphing and praising free grace: and went off, at last, as nappy as an angel.

Toplady.

# EVENING .- MARCH 8

## THE TRUE CHRISTIAN A HAPPY MAN

That man is blest who stands in awe Of God, and loves his sacred law; His seed on earth shall be renowned, And with successive honours crowned. His house, the seat of wealth, shall be An inexhausted treasury; His justice, free from all decay, Shall blessings to his heirs convey.

The soul that's filled with virtue's light, Shines brightest in affliction's night: To pity the distressed inclined, As well as just to all mankind.

Beset with threatening dangers round, Unmoved shall he maintain his ground: The sweet remembrance of the just Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust.

Drummond's Collection.

# THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN. ECCLESIASTES XII.

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be

not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened.

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought

low:

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel

broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and

the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

8 ¶ Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity. 9 And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a

weariness of the flesh.

13 ¶ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

## NO FLYING FROM CONSCIENCE.

Conscience. After all violence, and outrage great, Done to poor conscience, you do him intreat, Thinking for to prevail by flattery, But that in truth, I utterly defy, It is against my nature, you must know, Unto vile lust, fond pity for to show: God hath not given such a dispensation For me to wink at your abomination:

If God but once doth blow your candle out, I shall be quiet then, you need not doubt; But woe to you, as ever you was born, When God doth once his light to darkness turn. But whilst your soul retains a legal light, Your sins I cann't endure within my sight, God, I am sure, no liberty will give To any one, in horrid sin to live;
Nor will he give allowance for a day. 'Tis very dangerous for to delay
The work of thy repentance for an hour: What thy hand finds to do, do with all power, If me you don't believe, I pray thee, youth, Go and resolve thyself, of sacred truth.

Youth. Well, since that you no comfort do afford I will enquire of God's most holy word; So far I will your counsel take, for I Am sorely troubled, whither shall I fly? I will make trial, I'm resolved to see. Whether that truth and conscience do agree. The lip of truth can't err, though conscience may, When that misguided is, this goes astray. If truth and conscience speak the self-same thing, It will amazement to my spirits bring. What now I ask, and earnestly do crave, Is some short time in sin longer to have. Conscience denies it me, truth, what say you? O that you would a little favour shew To a poor lad, alas! I am but young, Like to a flower from the earth new-sprung, And as the frost the tender bud doth spoil, So conscience strove to serve me a great while. Must I reform, and all my sins forsake? Some fitter season, O! pray let me take; For all things there's a time under the sun, And when I older am, I will return.

Truth. Nay, hold vain youth, you are mistaken now, No time to sin God doth to thee allow: If I may speak, attend, and you shall hear; I with poor conscience must witness bear; I am his guide, his rule; tis by my light He acts and does, and saith the thing that's right. Art thou too young thy evil ways to leave? And yet, hast thou a precious soul to save? Art thou too young to leave iniquity, When old enough in hell for sin to lie? Some fitter season dost thou think to find? The devil sure darts it into thy mind. No time so fit as when the Lord doth call: Those who rebellious are, they one day shall Smart bitterly for their most horrid evil. In yielding to, and siding with the devil: But once again: I prithee hark to me; Don't God whilst thou art young, call unto thee, Remember thy Creator? Therefore fly To him with speed, and 'fore him prostrate lie, And thy first-fruits unto the Almighty give, Of thy best days, and learn betimes to live Unto the praise of his most holy name.

Keach.

# THE FACULTIES GIVEN TO MAN INDICATE HIS IMMORTAL DESTINY.

"Lift up thine eyes around about and see." Thus speaks the Lord to his people. We desire to obey his word, and doing so, when we look on

the starry heavens, at this period of the year, they seem more brilliant than at other seasons. We gaze on them with astonishment, and our thoughts are filled with admiration of the majestic works of the great Author of all. Truly is it said "the heavens declare the glory of God." We may admire the works of human art, and look with amazement at the iron roads formed by the hand of man; but how infinitely more worthy of attention are those magnificent heralds, the lights which the eternal has established in the boundless sky.

How mean is all earthly grandeur that would for a moment arrest our thoughts and detain our attention from God. Poor and miserably inefficient are the noblest achievements of human skill, compared with the least and most ordinary effort of our great Creator's hand. Above us splendid suns are shining; we tread on dust. Let us now, as the night wears away, arouse ourselves before our eyes are closed in sleep, to admire and praise what we behold, and humbly to adore the mighty Author of the wonderful order we remark in the arched vault of heaven, and in the multitude of refulgent stars we there discover, but which the powers of man are unequal to count. Their light, ever the same, exhibits no appearance of approaching exhaustion. Moving in their several orbits, they silently but expressively remind us of the greatness of God. In brilliant succession they manifest themselves from time to time, attesting the stupendous attributes of the Omnipotent. Thoughtlessly we behold them, and meditate too little on the important lesson they are fitted to teach. Their changing positions ought incessantly to recal to our thoughts the power of that mighty hand which they all obey-of him who sustains them, and preserves us to look upon them. subject is sublime. Let us not close our minds to the solemn appeal which all nature makes to us in the silent hours of night. Looking on those bright luminaries, feel we not that it is man's business to praise the Lord? May the sin, the dishonouring sin, of shutting our eyes to the glorious works of God never more be ours. Weak and thankless were the heart that could be insensible to the bounty which permits us to gaze upon them. Our thoughts shall learn to accustom themselves habitually to contemplate those regions above the sky, where we hope one day to find a blissful home. May that gracious Deity, whose forbearance is great, who has given us this erect form, with perceptions to reach the stars, and the art of so increasing our natural sight, so as to augment it a thousand fold, teach us wisely to apply our powers. Why, we may reverently ask, why were such faculties bestowed? Why are we enabled to continue awake while the night throws her sable veil over the world. Need we doubt that the object of it was to enable us to know more of thy glory, and to look up to thee with more fervent admiration, and to praise thee, great God, with unaffected love and gratitude.

Yes, O Lord, of this we feel assured, and with exulting admiration we cannot but exclaim, How vast! how superb! how wonderful are thy works! In wisdom hast thou created them all. The earth is full of thy riches. Almighty God, in acknowledgment for all we have received, we can but bend before thee; we can but prostrate ourselves in Contemplating thy power with awful joy, we tremble and adore. That we now do with appropriate humility, and will continue to do so, till thou art pleased to call us from this transitory stage, to another state of being, where we look to join the immortal host which inhabit the realms above, and to know the unspeakable felicity of gazing on thee, our gracious Maker, as thou art in heaven.

# MORNING.—MARCH 9.

THE ANGEL'S CALL.

Come to the land of peace!
Come where the tempest hath no longer sway,
The shadow passes from the soul away,
The sounds of weeping cease!

Fear hath no dwelling there!
Come to the mingling of repose and love,
Breathed by the silent spirit of the dove
Through the celestial air!

Come to the bright and blest,
And crown'd for ever!—'midst that shining band,
Gathered to heaven's own wreath from every land,
Thy spirit shall find rest!

Thou hast been long alone!
Come to thy mother!—on the Sabbath shore,
The heart that rocked thy childhood, back, once more,
Shall take its wearied one.

In silence wert thou left; Come to thy sisters!—joyously again, And the home-voices, blest in one sweet strain, Shall greet the long-bereft.

Over thine orphan head
The storm hath swept as o'er a willow's bough,
Come to thy father!—it is finished now;
Thy Tears have all been shed.

In thy divine abode
Change finds no pathway, memory no dark trace,
And, oh! bright victory—death by love no place!
Come, Spirit, to thy God!
Mrs. Hemans.

#### DIVINE COMFORT .- JOHN XVI.

13 When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and

shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.

16 ¶ A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves,

What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little

while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful,

but your sorrow shall be turned into joy

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child. she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man

taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and

ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not

unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world and go to the Father.

29 ¶ His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou

plainly, and speakest no proverb.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

# THE DESPONDING CHRISTIAN WILL BE REASSURED. AS OUR SAVIOUR WAS ON THE CROSS.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." How great must the anguish of the dying Redeemer have been, how violent the torture

that could for a moment overpower his resigned and determined spirit, and produce the melancholy complaint against his Father. So dreadful were his sufferings, that the firmness of his soul for a moment was vanquished, and he lost his wonted confidence and courage. In the garden of Gethsemane, aware of the mournful struggle which he had to go through, he still could scarcely imagine the cruel infliction would be so terrible as it proved. It was, however, but for a moment that Jesus experienced despondency. He immediately recovered his former strength, and despised the pains of the body.

Even in the weakness which he manifested on the cross, a moral is furnished for those who are ordained by the wise decrees of God to suffer in this world; for we presently see his spirit again lifted by the strength of his faith, of his hope. and of his love. His faith assured him that he should speedily return to his God and Father. and that his miserable death would accomplish the great work of redemption, which he came into this world to perform. Courage and strength were promptly renewed by the thought, and his love for mankind enabled him to endure a continuance of suffering with unmoved serenity. He was animated by the hope that the good work he had concluded would, under the blessing of God, last for ever, and secure to remote generations the blessing of expiation, and of consolation, and of that support which a pious life will supply. when the terrors of death assail. It was only for a moment that he confessed himself unequal to the task which he had undertaken. The pious and resigned Jesus soon conquered the sense of suffering, and thought only of heaven. How glorified was he at that moment of victory so achieved. There was at once seen his sublime dignity, his divine power; and there the assistance accorded to him from on high was also conspicuous. His soul was already living in thought above the skies, while his fragile body, weak as ours may be, was sinking under earthly suffering.

And thus it was that Jesus shewed himself the true son of God. In acknowledging him as such. we gain the blessed conviction that God, for his sake, will pardon helpless sinners. We may joyfully exclaim that Jesus Christ has abolished death, and, God be praised, he has also granted to us a victory over death, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Though our flesh and our hearts may fail, yet thou art, Oh Lord, by thy blessed

Son, the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever. Thou art identified with him, indulgent and forgiving Creator. Of what then can we reasonably be afraid, if our hearts are tuned to devotion, and guided and sanctified by him. Unto Christ we desire to live and to die.

Animated by this resolution, we cheerfully advance to meet the trials which God may ordain we should know, in order to purify our minds, and to enable us to burst the fetters which bind us down to the follies and vanities of the world. For a season they may afflict and wound our spirits, but the gloom of sadness will soon be dissipated. We shall have the blessed assurance that we are not forsaken by God, and that Christ. by the divine power of faith, will be manifested in glory. Heavenly comfort will thence be derived, we shall recognise, seize, and acknowledge it with deep and suitable gratitude. Turning to thee, Almighty Father, from whom all assistance and comfort must flow, we shall then be able to pray with a degree of fervor, unknown before, and remain undaunted and cheerful at the approach of death, even to the end. This relief, this unspeakable comfort, we shall owe to thee. our immolated Saviour, alone.

## THE SENSES ARE GOD'S WITNESSES.

To the senses God appealed when he commissioned Moses; to the senses he appealed when he convinced Israel; to the senses he appealed when he smote Pharaoh, (see Exod. iii. 10; iv. 1-9, 30, &c.) But our Lord himself settles the question by his own appeal to the senses, (Matt. xi. 4, 5.) In this case, John, being in prison, and seeing his end draw nigh, was desirous of introducing and transferring his disciples to Jesus. He, therefore, sent to him, saying, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" To this our Lord answers,—"Go and shew John the things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Here the entire appeal lies to sense and scripture, "Go and shew John the things which ye do hear and see "—ye hear the gospel preached agreeably to the scriptures, (Luke xvi. 31; John v. 46, 47.) "Ye see my mighty works, and they bear witness to all men that the Father hath sent me; that the Father dwelleth in me and I in him,"—(John v. 36; xvii. 21.) Thus the first divine evidence of our Lord's miracles was altogether derived from an appeal to the senses, and Christ himself bare witness to their credibility. And while he spake, a blind man came, led, it may have been, by the hand of a little child; and into those sightless eyeballs the light of the sun had never entered; to him the earth was but a place of stumbling-the glorious heavens one universal blank. Jesus looks in compassion-stretches out his hand-touches his dark eyes-and a world of beauty around him and of glory above him starts into visible being; and, like the sons of God on the morning of creation, he shouts forth the overflowings of and twee and joy. A leper, all diseased, draws near, with pain in many "p, and hideousness in every feature, and the

crowd recede in sympathetic horror from the danger of his infectious touch. But there is one that shuns him not. That one is Jesus. He again stretches out that hand of power; touches him whom not even a father, a mother, or a wife, would touch, and in a voice of gentlest mercy says, "I will, be thou clean;" and, as the hand of Moses plucked out of his bosom on Horeb, or Naaman emerging from the waters of Jordan, his flesh has become as the flesh of a little child -the deformity of the living skeleton has disappeared, the beauty of manhood blooms upon his countenance, and renovated health rejoices in every vein. But there is a sad procession passing by this scene of joy. We know it well, for we all have seen it often—it is the procession of the dead. There are mourning friends, with marks of grief upon every face. But who is she sorrowful above them all? Her, too, we know, for we all have seen her often. She is a lonely widow. The husband of her youth is gone, gathered to his fathers. One son, one only son, was left her, he was all the world to her. She lived only for her God, and for her son. But her son, too, is gone, and is father's grave is waiting for him; and his mother weeps as widowed mothers only weep. But Jesus sees her, and he has compassion on her, and says to her, "Weep not;" and he touches the bier, and the funeral crowd stand still; and he says, "Young man, arise," and the dead sits up, and begins to speak, and Jesus delivers him to his mother—(Luke vii. 11.)

Now, how were these and all such other miracles of our Lord substantiated? Simply by an appeal to the senses, as God's chosen witnesses. And not one single miracle is recorded, either in the Old or New Testament, without such open and unshrinking appeal to the senses of friends and enemies. Wherefore, by this scriptural and reasonable test, let us now try the sacrifice of the mass. I see the wafer before me. It is a little flour of wheat, mingled with water, and marked with certain figures. I look upon it, and its colour is white, its shape is circular; I measure it, and it may be a little more than an inch in diameter; I weigh it, and it amounts to a few grains; I taste it, and it is comparatively sweet; I subject it to a chemical analysis, and it yields the ordinary constituents of wheat flour and water. I look at this bread, and a man, yes, a very man, and no other, pronounces over it five words, "For this is my body;" or, as Dr. Henry More pronounces it, "the quinque verbal charm"and, lo! I am now told it is no longer wheat flour and water. but a whole, living man, with all his flesh, and all his blood -nay, with soul of man and deity supreme; and I am taught, I am commanded-nay, perchance, compelled-to kneel down to it in token of supreme adoration! A few other words, I now find, have been secretly pronounced over a cup of wine, and I am told it is no longer wine, but "the whole blood, of Jesus Christ." And again, I am required to kneel down and worship with the supreme adoration which I render to Almighty God. Dr. H. Cooke

# EVENING.—MARCH 9.

LUTHER'S HYMN.

A stronghold is the Lord our God,
A good defence, and armour true,
The darkness scatters at his nod:
The blinding mists he leads us through!
The wicked fiend of hell draws nigh:
In might and craft he takes the field,
With efforts dread to make us yield;
And on the earth no match hath he,
Our sworn and earnest enemy.

Of our own strength we nothing can—
Smitten by .uin's rapid sword,
But for us fights th' unfallen man,
The elect and champion of the Lord.
"How name ye him who is your stay?"
Jesus the Christ our heart replies,
The only God of earth and skies;
To him heaven's host their homage pay;
We doubt him not, he'll win the day!

Though banded devils through our path,
Like beasts of prey, to work our ill:
Why should we greatly fear their wrath?
Jesus will make us victors still.
This world's proud king with vengeful frown,
Marshals his demon hosts in fight;
We calmly bide his fiercest might!
Doom'd soon to lose the usurper's crown,
Christ's slightest word can strike him down.

Thro' storm and change Christ's word endures.
Why should hell's frown our hearts appal?
God's firm decree our soul insures,
His spirit's sunbeams hourly fall,
Ours is the conquest,—ours the gain,
Driven homeless far from child and wife,
And spoiled of fame, of goods, of life,
Still Canaan's bowers for us remain;
A father's smile; a deathless reign!

Knox.

#### CHRIST'S PRECEPTS. MATTHEW V.

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

- 5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
  6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
  - 1sness: for they shall be filled.
    7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
    8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
- 9 Blessed are the peace makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

ADVERSITY IS BENEFICAL, SEVERE TRIALS NECESSARY, TO THE CHRISTIAN'S WELL-BEING.

"The eyes of the Lord are upon me, and upon all the tribes of Israel." And not less are the eyes of the Lord upon us than we read that they were of old upon his chosen people. On us he looks down from day to day, bestowing upon us marks of his bounty, and proofs of his mercy; and while in the evening we collect our thoughts from the distracting cares of the world, reflect upon this important truth, and recal the delusions, the dangers, the suffering, and the toils from which we have happily escaped, or have successfully performed, we shall frequently appear to ourselves like men saved from the dangers of a tempestuous sea, and suddenly thrown on a beautiful island, where a bright sky is smiling upon us, and all the rarest riches of nature combined to refresh and delight our exulting hearts. Sweet is the calm stillness which the evening brings. Gladness comes over us while we look back to the fatigues we have endured in the course of the day. We seem in those happy moments to hear the Creator walking in our Eden, and calling to us with the voice of an indulgent parent. Oh, then, let us bless the Lord, and never forget his benefits. We admire the gracious dispositions of providence, by which we have been saved from the perils which threaten our lives and our peace, and throw ourselves with confidence into the arms of the Almighty. In the darkness of night we feel no alarm, no anxiety, for he protects our lives; he is our deliverer, he is the rock on which we place our trust.

But it may be that we have not escaped all the dangers which beset us in the course of the day. Many a dart may have been successfully impelled against us, and inflicted severe pain. It is, however, not for us to repine at the dispensations of the Most High, but with all humility to feel that if every day bring with it its troubles, they tend to a good and salutary purpose. Could we have

had to-day the opportunity of proving our patience, of trying our faith and perseverance, and our submission to the will of God without such trials? They are essential to establish the character and glory of a Christian. Through these we are enabled to escape many temptations. We might give ourselves up to pride, to luxury, to forgetfulness of God, and become unjust to men but for such admonitions. They remind us of our duty, and cause us to remain faithful to our vocation as Christians. Yes, in the school of severe adversity, smarting from the troubles of life, we gain the best lessons for the improvement of our immortal souls. They tend to expand and ripen the noblest endowments of our nature; they humble the haughty spirit, they fortify the heart, and move us to strive with more singleness of purpose, with more devoted energy for things

We may justly consider we owe it to these that from day to day we acquire readiness and capacity for doing good, while our bosoms learn resignation and confidence in God; they make us patient, watchful, meek, and submissive.

How strong might the dominion of sensuality become, into what wretched follies and culpable errors might we be carried, were sorrow and tribulation unknown. Aware of that, we must acknowledge that even sickness and sorrow are but blessings in disguise, and what is called misfortune, tends most assuredly to wean us from the vanities of the world, and directs our thoughts, our desires, our strivings, towards higher joys than the world can afford, which time cannot deteriorate, nor misfortune lose. To the troubles and sufferings of every day of sorrow, including that one which has now reached its close, we owe it that we are enabled with earnestness and holy confidence to raise our thoughts, O Lord, to thee. They teach us to count treasures not to be found below, and to seek for a more perfect happiness than can ever be realised in this state of being. That we are called to heaven, we can never forget, through these, for they teach us that here we have no resting place.

TRUE CHRISTIANS LOVE AS BRETHREN THOSE WHO DIFFER FROM THEM.

Each true christian is God's temple. When you speak of that christian, as God's temple, in his spiritual relations to God, as the receiver of his promises, and united to him, trough Jesus Christ; you speak with reference to him as an invisible and spiritual being. He worships God "in the spirit." "But when you speak of that temple, that christian,

with reference to what God has given him to do in the world, and for the world, you mean that man in his visible body—because, though he can live out of the body, he cannot come into contact with the world without that body. So the church, the fellowship of all true people of God, when you speak of what God had given it to do in the world, you speak of it as visible, under the form of a "sensible known company," with all the attributes of an ecclesiastical body. It cannot come into contact with the world without them. Consequently, the importance of the visible form, or body, of the spiritual church, and therefore of maintaining it as God hath appointed it, is precisely measured by the importance of all that mighty and glorious work which God has committed to his people for the salvation of all mankind.

Again, the question has probably arisen in your minds, what is the bearing of the views we have given on the relations we bear, as true christians, to believers in any other ecclesiastical connection? Surely it is a most interesting and important question; and I have no disposition to shun it. It is precisely the question of our Lord: "Who are my brethren? He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother and sister and brother." We ask the same—Who are our brethren? Who belong to the communion of saints, that Holy Catholic Church, which we believe in, as the mystical body of Christ? We answer: Every soul of man that hath a living faith in him, wherever found, whatever called. There is no difference here. Diversity of outward and visible church institutions, doubtless makes a great difference of privilege, and of benefit. But it makes no difference in the reality and perfectness of spiritual union to Christ, and to his temple—his living church, among those in whom, is "like precious faith," in Christ.

I beg to say that it is not because I am forced by the necessary result of the views we have taken of the true church of God, to make this concession. It is no concession. It is simply, the glad profession of a blessed truth which we love, and love to declare and embrace. And the more we have to be separated by differences of institutions and doctrines; the more we must love to remember that true believers in Jesus Christ, are one in him, and will be one with him for ever. I cannot allow the partition walls which divide the courts of the Lord's visible house, to prevent me from the precious enjoyment resulting from the thought that wherever my Lord has a true believer, I have a brother.

C. P. Mc. Ilvaine, D.D.

# MORNING.—MARCH 10.

LIFE'S DREAMS SOON FADE.

There never was an earthly dream
Of beauty and delight,
That mingled not too soon with clouds,
As sun-rays with the night,
That faded not from that fond heart
Where once it loved to stay,
And left that heart more desolate
For having felt its sway.

There never was a glad bright eye
But it was dimmed by tears,
Caused by such grief as ever dull
The sunshine of our years:
We look upon the sweetest flower;
'Tis withered soon and gone:
We gaze upon a star, to find
But darkness where it shone.

There never was a noble heart, A mind of worth and power, That had not in this changing world Pain, misery for its dower: The laurel on the brow hath hid From many a careless eye The secret of the soul within, Its blight and agony.

There never was-there cannot be On earth a precious spring, Whose waters to the fevered lip Unfailing we may bring: All changeth on this troubled shore, Or passeth from the sight: O for that world where joy and peace Reign as eternal light!

#### GOD WILL PUNISH VAIN DREAMS. JEREMIAH XXIII.

28 The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

30 Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.

31 Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that

use their tongues, and say, He saith.

32 Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

33 ¶ And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the LORD? thou shall then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake

you, saith the LORD.

34 And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the Lord, I will even punish that man and his house.

35 Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and,

What hath the Lord spoken?

36 And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the Lord of hosts our God.

37 Thus shalt thou say to the prophets, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

38 But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD: Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD;

39 Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your

fathers, and cast you out of my presence:

40 And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

#### THE DEITY AND HIS GREATNESS.

Oh, thou eternal One! whose presence bright All space doth occupy, all motion guide; Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight!
Thou only God! There is no God besides! Being above all things! Three in one! Whom none can comprehend, and none explore :

Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone; Embracing all-supporting-ruling o'er,-Being whom we call God, and know no more! In its sublime research, Philosophy May measure out the ocean deep-may count The sands, or the sun's says-but God, for Thee There is no weight nor measure: none can mount Up to thy mysteries; reason's brightest spark, Though kindled by thy light, in vain would try To trace thy counsels, infinite and dark : And thought is lost, ere thought can soar so high, Even like past moments in eternity. Thou from primeval nothingness did'st call First chaos, then existence :- Lord, on Thee Eternity had its foundation; all Spring forth from thee-of light, joy, harmony, Sole origin :- all life, all beauty thine! Thy word created all—and doth create; Thy splendour fills all space with rays divine, Thou art, and wert, and shalt be, glorious! great! Light giving light, sustaining Potentate! Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround, Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath! Thou the beginning with the end hast bound; And beautifully mingled life and death! As sparks mount upwards from the fiery blaze, As suns are born, so worlds spring forth from Thee, And as the spangles in the many rays Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry Of heaven's bright army glitters in thy praise. A million torches, lighted by thy hand, Wander unvaried through the blue abyss: They own thy power, accomplish thy command; All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss. What shall we call them? Piles of crystal light-A glorious company of golden streams! Lamps of celestial æther burning bright-Suns lighting systems with their joyous beams! But thou to these art as the noon to night! Yes! as a drop of water in the sea, All this magnificence in thee is lost:

What are ten thousand worlds compared to thee?

Thou art! directing, guiding all, Thou art! Direct my understanding then to Thee! Controul my spirit, guide my wandering heart: Though but an atom midst immensity,

Still I am something fashioned by thy hand! I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth, On the last verge of mortal being stand, Close to the realms where angels have their birth :-Just on the boundaries of the spirit-land!

The chain of being is complete in me: In me is matter's last gradation lost, And the next step is spirit-Deity!

# CHRISTIANS TO REMEMBER THIS WORLD IS NOT THEIR HOME.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Such is the exulting thought, such the exclamation of the true believer in Jesus. He feels that his gracious Saviour will recal him to life. The joyous consciousness endues him with strength to go through the sharpest trials, to bear with patience the most flagrant injustice, and to submit with calmness to the severest losses. These. severely as they may be felt, will not bend the true Christian. He, indeed, under such circumstances, may feel disturbed, but he will never despair. Sigh and complain we may, but we shall not mourn in abject sadness. The affecting visitations of the Lord may deeply wound, but knowing whence they proceed, and that eventually they will tend to our good, they can-not appal. No vain doubts, no sinful misgivings can shake our faith; no misfortune, however severe, deprive us of peace within. We must, in this soothing conviction, strive to animate and strengthen our belief that our blessed Redeemer will, at the latest day, call us back to life, by all the means which he has set before us in his gospel. That belief, that faith in his promise we must regard as a precious jewel, which the Lord has entrusted to our keeping. We must be careful not to desert Christ, by seeking to place ourselves on a footing of equality with this world, by adopting its follies, or joining in its low and sinful frivolities. We must look higher, and never forget that our exalted destiny lifts us far above such ignoble trifles. They must be regarded as wholly beneath our serious thought, if we would preserve the dearest possession of our hearts, the comforting conviction that eternal life will be ours, a conviction that will throw heavenly light on every dark spot of our earthly fate.

We have properly been taught that we ought to shew we aspire to eternal life, by unceasingly applying ourselves to the accomplishment of good works, if we wish to fortify our hearts against any doubts that would suggest themselves as to the reality of a future life. Cherishing this belief, we shall so live, that at the approach of death, we can know no fear of eternity. We must be careful that our hearts shall be always acceptable to spiritual and moral pleasure. Then will the prospect of a never-ending life beyond the grave always warm, inspire, and cheer the soul. He who surrenders himself up to worldly lusts, who madly loves it, and strives for its pleasures and its glory above all other things, soon loses a taste for heavenly prospects and divine pleasures, and this lost, the belief itself in a future state, is also impaired, from the vain distraction that must follow. In the wild intoxication of the senses, in the fetters of sensuality, by which he is bound under the dominion of vice, to which he is addicted, the

slave of worldly vanity loses the hope of everlasting happiness; and hope being no more, the foundations of his faith are fearfully undermined.

Then O! let our souls call up all their powers. and zealously endeavour to strengthen our faith, till we gain an undving existence. To this purpose let the solemn and important duty which devolves upon us, be ever in our thoughts. We must not fail to remember the cheerful prospect which the Redeemer discloses to regain his holy word. All our tastes should be formed for heavenly exercises and spiritual enjoyments. Let us live and love, hope and suffer, and with those feelings of zeal and resignation, the fear of what is to follow can never haunt our minds; shun impure intercourse with sceptics and infidels, ye who wish to "flee from the wrath to come," and consider this earth, and thy earthly vocation, however exalted, however lonely it may be, is not thy final destination. Then will the evanescent objects which now move before us, be seen in a proper light, and we shall act according to the principles of wisdom, and in the spirit of the gospel of Christ.

Would it not be the height of folly so to strive as if we were permanently to remain in that place, where we are only left to rest for a season, that we may gain strength for a longer and more important progress? Whatever our lot at the moment, never let us forget that here we are but pilgrims, who may rejoice in the comforts with which a benign providence cheers us on the road we have to journey, but not to suffer these to occupy our minds to the exclusion of meditation on matters of higher import. Let us burst from the bonds of sensuality, and endeavour, through the mercy of God, to fix our thoughts on those joys which are reserved for us in heaven. In the spirit of citizens of the sky, we must desire constantly to live while we remain on earth. Here, we should be as charitable, as faithful, as steady, and firm in the good, and as entirely devoted to the service of the Almighty, as those glorified spirits are who now surround his throne, and whose companions in bliss we expect to be-The commands of the Most High we shall then fulfil with the same consciousness and joy, as do the just who have already departed, and who are seen no more on earth. Such are the effects of a firm belief in the eternal existence, and such are the means for preserving unbroken this our belief. Gracious Saviour! all-bounteous Lord! confirm us in this faith, in the satisfying assurance that thou wilt at the latter day call us back to life, and make us rejoice in thy word, and know the sacrifice which thou hast made for sinners has sealed that redemption, and secured them a glorious immortality.

# EVENING.—MARCH 10.

TEACH US GOD'S WAYS.

Prevent me lest I harbour pride, Lest I in my own strength confide ; Show me my weakness; let me see I have my power, my all from thee.

Enrich me always with thy love; My kind protector ever prove : The signet put upon my breast, And let thy spirit on me rest.

Assist and teach me how to pray, Incline my nature to obey; What thou abhorest let me flee. And only love what pleases thee.

O may I never do my will, But thine, and only thine fulfil; Let all my time and all my ways Be spent and ended to thy praise.

Golden Treasury.

GOD 45 OUR CONSTANT PROTECTOR. PSALM XVI.

1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust. 2 O my soul, thou hast said under the LORD, Thou art my

LORD: my goodness extendeth not to thee; 3 But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excel-

lent, in whom is all my delight.

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

5 The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and of my

cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage. 7 I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my

reins also instruct me in the night seasons. 8 I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at

my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever-

## IMPROVE TIME BY HOLY ASPIRINGS AND GOOD WORKS.

"The snares of lusts drown men in destruction and perdition." Happy will it be for us, if we never experience the truth of this remark in ourselves, if we never should lose even our health,

our comfort, through a part of our life. when we look back with a scrutinizing eve on the past, and resolutely subject ourselves to the ordeal of searching self-examination, how often do we fondly, vainly wish, that with the thought we could bring back the days of our youth, which, for the most part, were so little improved, and so weakly thrown away! Would that we could be permitted to live through them again! how carefully would they be husbanded-how prudently would they be employed, now that we can appreciate the high value of time, of which, alas! it has too truly been said, weak mortals "take no note but by its loss." Now we could persuade ourselves, that the vanished hours would be wisely and profitably spent, since we are no longer the slaves of weak frivolity. The wish, consistently with the decrees of the Eternal, cannot be realised, and must not be too much indulged, lest unbecoming sadness should come over us. But let this resolution be deeply impressed on our souls, that it behoves us to make a wise use of those days which God may vet permit us to see, that our hearts shall not be drowned in the lusts, nor our eyes blinded by the follies and vanities of the world. No more will we be led away by seducing examples, and the resolution to avoid such snares, shall be constantly revived while we raise our thoughts to God, at the close of each succeeding day.

At this silent hour, seem we not in a manner to stand on the verge of existence? Seem we not about to take leave of the visible world, when we know that yet a few moments, and we shall recline silent and motionless, in unconscious sleep? We have no certain assurance that we shall live to see another morning, and the gloom of night presents a striking and solemn represen-

tation of the darkness of the grave.

Yet even when this appearance, with all the reflection it suggests, is before us, our souls are still occupied with what they have known on earth; too feeble to break the bonds which hold them down to the cares of the world. O! may we from this moment be ever capable of raising our thoughts in worthy aspirations to things of higher import. Then, how little would the troubles and storms of life disturb our peace-how firmly should we resist any temptation to do that which is sinful. Alas! even up to the present day, we feel our weak and foolish hearts are still worldly, still fondly attached to the things of time. We have gained little wisdom even in the

school of adversity. A great poet has said its uses are sweet, but we have not known how to prove them so. Feeling our own incapacity, we may thus apostrophise, "O heart! thou oughtest to become more contented, more modest, more temperate, if thou wishest to attain everlasting happiness. Thou hast to learn how to dispense with the pleasures of life, and how to lay down its comforts with greater composure and resignation, than thou hast yet done, if death is not to approach thee as a messenger of terror.

From this evening forward, we devoutly engage ourselves to devote to heaven and our gracious Creator our frail and froward hearts. We will strive to persevere in good works to win eternal life. Shouldst thou grant us the privilege of waking to a new day, to-morrow we will not forget, so we fondly hope, for a moment, that we belong to heaven, and that into that life we crave after this we cannot carry any of the wealth which we may strive for in this world, but simply the consciousness of having done good or evil deeds.

This day we have strictly examined our bosoms before thee, O Lord! thou searcher of all hearts! Thus we propose on each returning night, to subject ourselves to the like enquiry, lest we should, unconsciously bloated by pride, and absorbed in the lusts of the flesh, turn away from thee, and become wholly unworthy of thy protecting care. Each day carries us nearer to that awful period when we must stand before thy bar, where thou. in the scales of justice, wilt weigh all the acts of our life; each day carries us nearer to that moment when we are to reap what we have sown. Remembering this, let henceforward our thoughts. our conversation be of heaven, our powers given wholly to thee, thou Holy One. vanishes from our view-its glory fades, and only that which is identified with the word and the majesty of God can alone endure for ever.

MAN CAN OF HIMSELF ERING FORTH NO GOOD.

Virtues and graces do not proceed originally from any strength of nature, or any inherent power in man's free-will; nor are they acquired by the culture of philosophy, the advantages of education, or any improvement whatsoever of natural abilities by the helps of art or industry; but are in truth, the proper effects of that supernatural grace which is given unto us by the good pleasure of God the Father, merited for us by the precious blood of God the Son, and conveyed into our hearts by the sweet and sacred inspirations of God the Holy Ghost. "Love, joy, peace," &c. are fruits, not at all of the flesh, but merely and entirely of the Spirit.

All those very many passages in the New Testament, which either set forth the unframcableness of our nature to the

doing of any thing that is good,-" Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought;" "In me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing," and the like: or else ascribe our best performances to the glory of the grace of God,—"Without me ye can do nothing;" "All our sufficiency is of God;" "Not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;" "It is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed." and the like, are so many confirmations of the truth. Upon the evidence of which truth it is, that our mother, the church, hath taught us in the public service to beg at the hands of Almighty God, that he would "endue us with the grace of his holy spirit, to amend our lives according to his holy word:" and again (consonantly to the matter we are now in hand with, almost in the same terms) that he would "give to all men increase of grace, to hear meekly his word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the spirit." As without which grace it were not possible for us to amend our lives, or to bring forth such fruits, according as God requireth in his holy word.

And the reason is clear; because as the tree is, such must the fruit be. Do men look to "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Or can they expect from a salt fountain other than brackish water? Certainly what is born of flesh can be no better than flesh. "Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?" Or how can any thing that is good proceed from a heart, all the "imaginations of the thoughts whereof are only and continually evil?" If we would have the fruit good, reason wills (and our Saviour prescribeth the same method) that order be taken, first to

make the tree good.

But you will say, It is as impossible so to alter the nature of the flesh as to make it bring forth good spiritual fruit, as it is to alter the nature of a crab or thorn, so as to make it bring forth a pleasant apple. Truly and so it is: if you shall endeavour to mend the fruit by altering the stock, you shall find the labour altogether fruitless. A crab will be a crab still, when you have done what you can; and you may as well hope to wash an Ethiopian white, as to purge the flesh from sinful pollution.

The work therefore must be done quite another way; not by alteration, but addition. That is, leaving the old principle to remain as it was, by superinducing, ab extra, a new principle, of a different and more kindly quality. We see the experiment of it daily in the grafting of trees. A crab-stock, if it have a scion of some delicate apple artfully grafted in it; look what branches are suffered to grow out of the stock itself, they will all follow the nature of the stock, and if they bring forth any fruit at all, it will be sour and styptic? but the fruit that groweth from the graft will be pleasant to the taste, because it followeth the nature of the graft.

Bishop Sanderson.

# MORNING.—MARCH II.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH THROUGH CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

Lord Jesus, fountain of my life! Sole comfort in this world of strife! I come both weary and opprest, And pray, Lord, take my soul to rest!

Thy stripes have me a sinner healed; My pardon with thy blood is sealed; Thy agony, thy dying breath Redeemed me from eternal death.

Unto my heart when speech I want, The utterance of thy spirit grant: O that my soul to heaven may rise, When death in darkness seals my eyes.

What songs of everlasting joy Shall mine and angels' tongues employ How shall we to eternity Exalt thy love and mercy free!

Brethren's Collection.

### MEEKNESS AND GENTLENESS MARK THE TRUE CHRISTIAN. II. CORINTHIANS, X.

1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you,

but being absent am bold toward you:

- 2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to
- 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds:)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

- 7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? if any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.
- 8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. 10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in

deed when we are present.

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath

distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. 14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

## LOVE OF GOD AND MAN THE ESSENCE OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Yes, Lord, we acknowledge, in thy sublime course we recognise. the highest and holiest example of love which the world has seen, and which it should be our object to imitate. When the fearful period approached, when thy sufferings were to expiate mortal sin-

nings, thou wert engaged the whole night in prayer, to arm thy soul with the conquering power of love, that thou mightest endure the last extremity of pain, to accomplish man's salvation. It was thine, with tenderness, to caution thy disciples against inconstancy, under the trials which they had to encounter. The vile intentions of thy betrayer were not unperceived by thee; and thou, with generous love, sought to snatch him from the awful precipice on which he stood. When the woman who anointed thee was harshly blamed, with hearty and condescending kindness, thy voice was lifted up in her defence. She was a sinner; but, since thou discoveredest that her heart was disposed to true repentance, by thy merciful encouragement she was enabled to recover from her fall.

Thou knowest how salutary it would be to all professors of thy faith, constantly to meditate on thy sufferings and death, and how effectually their faith would be strengthened and fortified by its commemoration. Therefore, didst thou institute, in thy wisdom and thy love, the sacrament of the holy supper, in remembrance of thy death, that those who profess to honour thy name should never forget the divine goodness which it was thine to exhibit, that goodness not to be surpassed, for no one could give a greater proof of his love than is furnished by laying down his life for his brethren. With what meekness and forbearance didst thou speak to thy enemies, more especially to thy wicked betrayer. With what generous and forgiving love didst thou pray for thy murderers. Even in the hour of agony and death, thy heart, O Jesus! was filled with love and tenderness for others; with care and pity for the sorrowing mother, that she might not sink under the burden of grief, in the hour when a sword pierced her soul; and with compassionate mercy thou turnedest to one of the malefactors crucified by thy side, and gave him comfort and promised joy. Thou couldst not refuse, even in his case, to grant the prayer of a contrite heart: thou couldst not permit him to die in despair; and, when thy erring disciple came to thee after his fall, with what gracious indulgence didst thou forgive his transgression, that he might gain new strength, and grow bolder and firmer in his faith. The whole of thy life was love, that love which finally conquered and gained its noblest victory at Gethsemane, and at Golgotha.

Lord, grant that our hearts, devoutly aspiring, at a measureless distance, to copy thy example, may become rich in love as thine was. Then might we feel ourselves deserving to be viewed as worthy objects of the benevolence of Jesus, of that redemption which it was his object to accomplish. Great in that case would be our joy; inexpressibly great our happiness. Well, then, let us banish far from our bosoms whatever has a tendency to weaken, in any respect to impair, or stifle that love in our hearts. First and foremost, away with all wickedness, the grave of love—haughtiness, the death of love—selfishness which stifles love in its birth—insensibility and anger, which render the heart harsh and inaccessible to generous feeling.

To love, to love alone, we ought to consider we owe all that we have known of real happiness. Without that, life would be a joyless void. It ought unceasingly to be present to our minds, that the Lord will distinguish his faithful worshippers by the love which they bear to each other, and that the scripture calls that man a liar, who says that he loves God, and yet hates his brethren.

It is only, then, if we feel kindness and holy love in our hearts, that we can hope to complete our journey through life in peace, animated by cheering hope, and the spirit of true devotion and holy obedience. Grant us this, O Jesus! It is our anxious wish, like thee, by deeds of love and piety, to spread happiness around, and to prove ourselves the humble, sincere adorers of God, and the anxious unceasing friends of man. But without thy gracious aid, we can do nothing. To this, then, O, Lord! we lift our thoughts, and pray thee to fill our hearts with heavenly love, that our lives may be marked by virtuous deeds, and that under suffering, we, sustained by thy powerful arm, may be models of heroism and patience, and finally depart, happy in the contemplation of works and words of faithful love. This we beseech thee to grant to the prayers now breathed before thee; and blessed will this day be to us, if thou wilt deign to hearken to our petition. Assured of this, we shall finish it with joy, even though it were thy good pleasure to render it the list we are destined to behold on earth.

1.163E WHO ARE TROUBLED IN MIND ARE NOT IN A HOPELESS STATE.

When thou gets no comfort in hearing, nor ease to thy white in preying, and yet growest more eager to hear, and art more frequent in prayer; Oh soul, great are thy faith and prince!

blessed is your condition, if you have this testimony in

your conscience; that, acknowledging your own natural ignorance and blindness, you call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, to enlighten your mind, to make his way plain before you, and to give you a strong and distinct perception of the great things that concern your eternal peace.

Blessed is your condition, if, feeling your utter incapacity to procure the favour of God by the best of your duties, reformations, or performances, and confounded, in your own sight, for your great defects, you build all your hope of acceptance with God on what Christ has done and suffered for you. Blessed is your condition, if, afflicted with the exceeding great vileness of your natural affections, and longing for victory over them; for a more spiritual mind, and for a farther progress in love both to God and man; you depend on the renewing, sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, to work this divine change within you.

This is to believe in the only begotten Son of God, without partiality and without hypocrisy. This the word of God pronounces to be that dependance in Christ, which shall never be confounded.

Toplady.

# EVENING .- MARCH 11.

MAN'S FOLLY-GOD'S GOODNESS AND JUSTICE.

When man grows bold in sin,
My heart within me cries,
He hath no faith of God within,
Nor fear before his eyes.

He walks awhile concealed
In a self-flattering dream,
Till his dark crimes at once revealed,
Expose his hateful name.

His heart is false and foul,
His words are smooth and fair;
Wisdom is banished from his soul,
And leaves no goodness there.

He plots upon his bed
New mischiefs to fulfil;
He sets his heart, and hand, and head,
To practice all that's ill.

But there's a dreadful God,
'Though men renounce his fear;
His justice, hid behind a cloud,
Shall one great day appear.

His truth transcends the sky,
In heaven his mercies dwell;
Deep as the sea his judgments lie,
His anger burns to hell.

How excellent his love,
Whence all our safety springs:
O never let my soul remove
From underneath his wings.

Watts.

MAN SHALL BE VISITED ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS.

JOB XXXIV.

2 Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

3 For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.



"NO BOOK EVER GAVE SUCH A MORTAL WOUND TO POPERY AS THIS."

Neale's History of the Puritans.

# FOXE'S

# BOOK OF MARTYRS;

EDITED BY THE REV. JOHN KENNEDY.



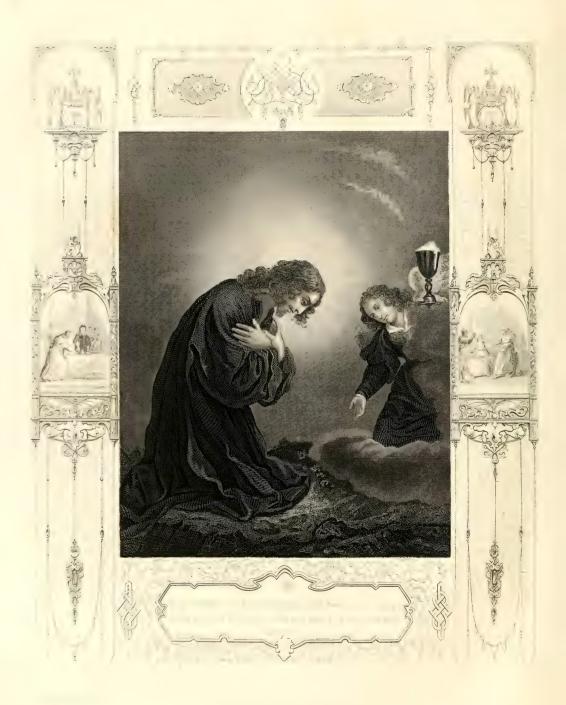
"WHAT THE CHURCH OF ROME HAS DONE."

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN TALLIS AND CO.,
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4 Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

5 For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken

away my judgment.

6 Should I lie against my right hand? my wound is incurable without transgression.

7 What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?

8 Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he

should delight himself with God.

10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

11 For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and

cause every man to find according to his ways.

21 For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

22 There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the

workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

23 For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God.

24 He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth

them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

26 He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others:

27 Because they turned back from him, and would not

consider any of his ways:

28 So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto

him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

29 When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?

and when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only:

30 That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensared.

31 Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.

32 That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

THE TOILS, CARES, AND ANXIETIES OF LIFE, NOT
TO BE VIEWED AS EVILS.

"O! my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." Even thus we might frequently feel disposed to exclaim with Moses, when the burden and toils of that vocation to which my own choice or the pressure of circumstances has appointed us, threatens to overpower our strength, or when we feel our resolution is not equal to the difficulties of our situation. Sometimes we are disposed to think that we could feel more contented, be more happy, and render more benefits to our fellow-creatures in a position different from that which has been assigned to us. Yet, if we calmly reflect on our condition, we often see reason to suspect that these ideas are foolish, if they are not criminal; for where

could be found a vocation which would not breed burdens and anxieties. And would it be reasonable to wish for a position in life which would impose upon us no care, no toil; which would be perfectly easy and delightful, and after all, best for our future welfare. No. Were such our condition, it would hardly give us more peace of mind, it would not increase our happiness. If in the evening, the season for rest is sweet and refreshing; if the retrospect of the day's labour now performed, is a source of joy, and a reward for past exertions; if our thoughts gratefully ascend to heaven, thence deriving comfort and new strength, all these gratifications we owe to the toils we have encountered in our vocation during the day. They gave us the opportunity of proving ourselves firm and faithful, and resolute to tread in the footsteps of our Saviour. Hence arises an elevation of sentiment, hence flows that peace of mind which the world cannot take away. The trials we have known, have served to show we desire to be numbered among the disciples of Jesus, and are in some degree worthy of his love, of that love which even the anguish he endured while still wearing the mortal form on the cross, could not subdue. Further, we may congratulate ourselves that our toils and troubles have effectually protected us against evil thoughts and deeds. How salutary have they become for our hearts. ought to acknowledge with unaffected gratitude, have turned us from haughtiness and luxury; that they taught us to make a prudent use of the passing hour; that they kept us from vices and follies into which we might otherwise have been led, and which, at a future day, would have been the subject of bitter and unavailing repentance.

Sensible of this, we will no more complain that life is identified with care and labour. We must regard it as among the wise and gracious dispensations of providence, to which it is the bounden duty of man unrepining to submit. Little do those happy people, as they are erroneously called, who pass their days in listless indolence and sensual gratifications, deserve to be the objects of our envy. Their hearts are beset with many dangerous follies; virtuous sentiments incessantly repelled by fashionable sophistry; the consciousness of good actions is almost wholly unknown; they are never, they perhaps know not why, free from sadness and weariness, and appreciate not the sweetness of rest, since they are strangers to healthful fatigue. Their meals are

not seasoned by hunger, and cheerfulness is wanting. At the close of the day, they cannot look back on what they have accomplished with any feeling of gratification, but shame must overcome them when they recal their mispent hours. Discontented with themselves, when they reflect that they have rendered no service to society, and how dreary must their declining years be-how vivid the dread of giving an account, which cannot be long delayed, of that stewardship to the eternal Judge, before whom the trembling sinner is soon to appear! We thank thee, O God! from the depths of our hearts; we return these our humble thanks that thou hast cast our lot among the sons of toil, and that thou hast, up to this period, given us, in thy bounty, strength and determination to fulfil the duties which devolve upon us in our several occupations, and to bear their various burdens. From that source our hearts draw the purest joys we can know on earth, and that eternal reward which thou hast graciously promised to all who truly believe in thy name, will one day be ours, if, awake to our own interest and to thy bounty, we remain faithful to the end.

THE TRIALS OF A WELL-SPENT LIFE DULY RECORDED IN HEAVEN.

"What mean," said I, "those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and, among many other feathered creatures, several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches." "These," said the genius, "are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, with the like cares and

passions that infest Human Life."

I here fetched a deep sigh. "Alas," said I, "man was made in vain!—how is he given away to misery and mortality! -tortured in life, and swallowed up in death." The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bade me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. "Look no more," said he, "on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity, but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it." I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran ar ong them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers, and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle that I might fly away to those happy seats, but the genius told me there was no passage to them except through the Gates of Death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. "The islands," said he, "that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching farther than thine eve, or even thine imagination, can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them. Every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza! habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared. that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for Addison.

## MORNING.—MARCH 12.

SECRET HUMBLE ADORATION.

Lord, hear the voice of my complaint,
Accept my secret prayer;
To thee alone, my king, my God,
Will I for help repair.

Thou in the morn my voice shalt hear
And with the dawning day
To thee devoutly I'll look up,
To thee devoutly pray.

And when thy boundless grace shall me To thy loved courts restore, On thee I'll fix my longing eyes, And humbly there adore.

Drummond's Collection.

#### TRUST GOD AND PRAISE HIS GLORY. PSALM LVII.

1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth

all things for me.

3 He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

4 My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears

and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.
6 They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is

bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they have fallen themselves. Selah.

7. My heart is fixed. O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing.

7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

8 Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. 9 I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

10 For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth

unto the clouds.

11 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.

PRAY NOT WITH THE LIPS, BUT WITH THE HEART.

"How much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him." This was the cheering reflection of Jesus addressed to his disciples. Its wisdom and importance cannot be denied. The privilege, the blessing of prayer is great; is of immense value. Strengthened by a sincere and zealous appeal to the Almighty we can meet any temptation, and encounter any evil with a confident expectation that we shall come triumphantly through the struggle in which we must engage. We meet the world with weapons superior to its own; we do not curse, but we bless; we do not hate, but we love; we do not render evil for evil, but we overcome evil with good. Still keeping this object in view, let us pray unceasingly, and teach our hearts to repose on God with child-like confidence. Oh! how many times have we had the felicity to enjoy that blessing, that sweet relief which comes over the heart when it can address itself to its maker! But with deep humiliation we must recal the mournful truth, that as often we have formally engaged in prayer, without feeling ourselves strengthened and confirmed in our love of God. and those things which might tend to his glory without deriving new courage from the exercise to strive against sin. Why, let us ask ourselves, did this happen? Why was it that this devotional effort had not always the same power over our spirits? Because no prayer but that which the just and the pious earnestly, fervently breathe, can draw from heaven those blessings which we seek, that "peace of mind which passeth all understanding." Our thoughts ought to be wholly occupied by what is good, and especially while we pray, withdraw from everything but the worship of our eternal Father. When we so address ourselves to heaven, steadfastly intent on favour from above, while we crave and are sincerely anxious to render ourselves, in some degree, worthy of it, a favouring answer to our solicitations will not be denied. We must, therefore, strive to render our souls holy, and labour to purify our every thought. Let us take

care that what we call our prayers, do not degenerate into a mechanical repetition of words, a peculiar movement of the mouth. The professed object of our solicitude ought not to be defeated by sinful indifferences. A few moments each morning truly devoted to the Lord, will hallow and bring a blessing on each succeeding hour of the day. They will give strength and confidence to carry us through the struggle which we must maintain. But is it true, we ask ourselves, that we must be engaged in a perpetual strife? It is. Look but around, and see how incessantly we are surrounded by the lusts and vanities of life; by the perverseness and example of the wicked; by obstacles and difficulties that exhaust our patience, and overcome our best resolutions. We are therefore continually in danger of losing our virtue, and with it our peace. How then shall we best prepare to meet such formidable enemies to our happiness? Of what weapons can we avail ourselves to repel their attacks? Fixed, as we persuade ourselves we are, to resist evil, the weak polluted heart will frustrate all our best designs. if we are not assisted and sustained by the grace of God.

Placed in this perilous situation, let us humbly approach his awful throne, confess the insufficiency of our own powers, and implore a God of might, praying that we may have the succour of his Almighty arm, to supply that aid which is essential to the accomplishment of our holiest purposes.

O God! thou knowest we live in a world of trials, of sin and sorrow, where the allurements of vice are evermore displaying themselves, to lure us to our undoing. Easily can they vanquish us, if, abandoned by thee, we are left to ourselves alone. Strengthen and support us by thy mercy, that we may ultimately work out our salvation. Be not far off from us while we call on thy sacred name; hide not thy face from us when we turn to thee in devout supplication. Favour us with thy encouraging countenance, that we may ever address ourselves to thee with a good heart, upright intentions, and sincere confidence in thy goodness. Govern our thoughts by thy blessed spirit, that so directed, we may proceed with serene undaunted perseverance in the road of piety and truth, which leads to thee and heaven.

Lord of all! who abundantly grantest all the children of thy love can wisely ask or imagine, thou wilt not fail thy faithful penitent worshippers in the hour of their greatest need. Thou wilt bestow thy light from above, to cheer us on our way; thou wilt enlarge our understandings, thou wilt supply the admonition at the proper moment of which we stand in need. Prompted by thee, all we are capable of effecting will be successfully achieved. We bear thy words in our minds, and thy promises are engraved on our hearts. Thou, we know, art never distant from us. The model of our Saviour we have always before our eyes, and never can we forget his incomparable principles, and his sublime example. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," is the solemn charge which we have received from the Redeemer of the world. God of all mercy! in the fulness of thy compassion, conduct us safely through all the snares and various perils which beset our faith in this scene of perplexity and mourning; and eventually, in thy own good time, bring us before thy throne of immortal glory. There, we presume to hope, by thy bounty, we shall be permitted to join the "spirits of just men made perfect" in hymning thy praise, and enjoy the unspeakable felicity of serving thee in innocence and in joy for evermore.

#### CHRIST'S KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD.

The sanctions of Christ's law are rewards and punishments. But of what sort? Not the rewards of this world; not the offices or glories of this state; not the pains of prisons, banishments, fines, or any lesser and more moderate penalties; nay, not the much lesser negative discouragements that belong to human society. He was far from thinking that these could be the instruments of such a persuasion as he thought acceptable to God. But, as the great end of his kingdom was to guide men to happiness after the short images of it were over here below, so he took his motives from that place where his kingdom first began, and where it was at last to end; from those rewards and punishments in a future state, which had no relation to this world; and to show that his "kingdom was not of this world," all the sanctions which he thought fit to give to his laws were not of this world at all.

St. Paul understood this so well, that he gives an account of his own conduct, and that of others in the same station, in these words: "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men:" whereas, in too many Christian countries since his days, if some who profess to succeed him were to give an account of their own conduct, it must be in a quite contrary strain: "Knowing the terrors of this world, and having them in our power, we do not persuade men, but force their outward profession against their inward persuasion."

Now, wherever this is practised, whether in a great degree or a small, in that place there is so far a change from a kingdom which is not of this world, to a kingdom which is of this world. As soon as ever you hear of any of the engines of this world, whether of the greater or the lesser sort, you must immediately think that then, and so far, the kingdom of this world takes place. For, if the very essence of God's worship be spirit and truth, if religion be

virtue and charity, under the belief of a Supreme Governor and Judge, if true real faith cannot be the effect of force, and if there can be no reward where there is no willing choicethen, in all or any of these cases, to apply force or flattery, worldly pleasures or pain, is to act contrary to the interest of true religion, as it is plainly opposite to the maxims upon which Christ founded his kingdom; who chose the motives which are not of this world, to support a kingdom which is not of this world. And indeed it is too visible to be hid. that wherever the rewards and punishments are changed from future to present, from the world to come to the world now in possession, there the kingdom founded by our Saviour is, in the nature of it, so far changed, that it is become, in such a degree, what he professed his kingdom was not-that is, of this world; of the same sort with other common earthly kingdoms, in which the rewards are worldly honours, posts, offices, pomp, attendance, dominion; and the punishments are prisons, fines, banishments, galleys and racks, or something less of the same sort.

Bishop Hoadly.

# EVENING.—MARCH 12.

#### WORLDLY PLEASURES NOT COVETED BY THE CHRISTIAN

Let worldly minds the world pursue, It has no charms for me; Once I admired its trifles too, But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
Now I have know the Lord.

As by the light of opening day, The stars are all concealed, So earthly pleasures fade away, When Jesus is revealed.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone, And wholly live to thee! But may I hope that thou wilt own A worthless worm like me?

Yes! though of sinners I'm the worst, I cannot doubt thy will! For if thou hadst not loved me first, I had refused thee still.

Golden Treasury.

# THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S IMPORTANT CHARGE. I CORINTHIANS, IV.

- 1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.
- 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
- 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.
- 4 For I know nothing of myself: yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.
- 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lora come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, prethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst received it?

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle

unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ve are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong: ye are honourable, but we are despised.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain

dwelling place.

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being re-

viled we bless: being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. 14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my be-

oved sons I warn you.

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. .

### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS MUST PRO-DUCE NO RANCOUR OR PERSECUTION.

"Love worketh no ill to her neighbour." Many a joyful experience we have, each of us, made of the truth and importance of this salutary lesson. The love of our fellow-creatures tends every day to render us thankful and happy, to strengthen and support our minds. The good wishes of others, and their kindly sympathies, open to us a rich and everflowing source of consolation. Where such a spirit manifests itself, we feel we owe all the benefits, all the blessings which we are permitted to know, emanating from it, to the doctrine of Christ diffused among the nations; to the great and God-like commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The first and greatest commandment proclaims that among all people, among all classes, whatever their religious distinctions, he only can be acceptable in the sight of the Lord, who seeks not to do evil to his brethren, but whose joy and consolation it is to render them good. True it is, and sad is the reflection, a series of ages since the Christian era were seen, in which the spirit of fraternal love seemed to have separated itself from the Christian name; a time when those who called themselves the servants of the Most High, panted to shed the blood of their fellow men, with unhallowed rage; and weakly and wickedly proclaimed, that

in mercilessly destroying his image on earth, they rendered a grateful service to a God of mercy. But those who then bore the name of Christians were not imbued with the genuine spirit of Christianity, were not awake to the evil they were doing to the faith they undertook to vindicate. God be praised, that those days of revolting and unholy fanaticism have passed away, and fraternal benevolence now more generally prevails throughout the whole Christian world. In our time, however various the opinions which obtain, however different the rites which are observed by the several denominations of Christians, religious hatred, the abhorent offspring of ignorance, rancour, and superstition, has ceased to rage to so fearful an extent. The worshippers of Jesus no longer engage in deadly quarrels on account of disputed points, and conflicting interpretations, which have little to do with the essence of that faith which all profess to reverence. Let differences in opinions, and variations in rites continue. so the great family of mankind remember and admit that all have the same end in view, share the same hope, and look up to the same Saviour, having one and the same destination. Though "love which is the fulfilling of the law," is weakened and impaired, so the brotherly communion is not severed by them, the holy tie by which all Christians are bound to follow the same great Captain. is not broken; if unanimity be wanting, sinful malevolence will not be found, and brutal persecution will be unknown.

From time to time, if we look back to the blessings we have known in the day which has closed, we must with grateful reverence acknowledge that we owe the greater portion of them to the spirit of fraternal love which Christianity has so largely spread abroad, in widely disseminating that sublime model for imitation which has been furnished by its divine founder. We must not forget that it is our bounden duty to preserve and propagate it as far as lies in our power. and with ever-watchful assiduity, we must guard our hearts against being seduced to egotism and selfishness. Yielding to them, would be fearfully to wander from duty.

Lest in this respect we fail, we must carefully and earnestly, from day to day, search our own hearts. Strictly we should inquire, have we, since yesterday, promoted with sincere unfailing zeal. and in the spirit of fraternal love, the welfare of our brethren-have we borne offences offered to us with patient meekness-have we, in the

generous and forgiving spirit of Christ, been solicitous to render good for evil? Have we, let us ask ourselves, neglected any opportunity of becoming a benefactor to those who suffer under evils which it might be in our power to remove or abate? Do we feel that in this respect we have been wanting? Let us, without loss of time, apply ourselves to atone for the sin against brotherly love, for the culpable neglect of duty, by exerting ourselves, with redoubled energy, to secure to our bosoms that heavenly peace, which can alone spring from a consciousness that we have not been wholly unmindful of the task imposed upon us by the glorious example of that Redeemer, whom we aspire to follow, by seeking, with unwearied eagerness, to wipe away the tear from the eye of sorrow, and by sincere anxiety at all times to promote the welfare of our fellow men.

THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST MUST BE PREPARED FOR UNKINDNESS IN THIS WORLD.

For the day is at hand, the day of the Lord, when God shall bring every hidden thing to light, when every man's works shall be tried and weighed; tried in the fire of his purity, weighed in the balance of his righteousness; and as the issue proves, so must the consequence abide to all eternity; a trial and a scrutiny which no flesh could abide, were it not for the interposing merits of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and our Judge. But he has already told us that he will then own none but those who were faithfully devoted to his service here. To the urgent cries and strongest pleas of others, he will give no other answer, but "I know you not, I never knew you." "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire." What will it then avail to plead our privileges, when, if this be all, we may read our doom already? "And that servant who knew his master's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; for unto whomsoever much is given, of him much will be required: and to whom men have committed much, of them they will ask the more." O consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

Finally, let those who through grace have attained to worship God in spirit and in truth, be careful to adorn and hold last their profession. You see your calling brethren: let the name of Christian always remind you of your high obligation to, and continual dependence upon, the author of your faith. Use it as a means to animate and regulate your whole behaviour. And if upon some occasions, you find undeserved ill offices, or unkind constructions, wonder not at it: thus it must and will be, more or less, to all who would exercise themselves in keeping a conscience void of offence.-Yet be careful to model your actions by the rule of God's word, Our Lord says, "Blessed are ye when men revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Observe, first, the evil spoken of you must be false and groundless: and secondly, the cause must be for the sake of Christ, and not for any singularities of their own, either in sentiment or practice, which you cannot clearly maintain from scripture. It is a great blessing when the innocence and simplicity of the dove is happily blended with true wisdom. It is a mercy to be kept from giving unnecessary offence, in these times of division and discord. Endeavour that a principle of love to God, and to mankind for his sake, may have place in all your actions; this will be a secret, seasonable, and infallible guide, in a thousand incidents, where particular rules cannot reach. "Be sober, be vigilant, continue instant in prayer;" and in a little while all your conflicts shall determine in conquest, faith shall give place to sight, and hope to possession. Yet a little while, and "Christ, who is our life, shall appear," to vindicate his truth, to put a final end to all evils and offence; and then we also, even all who have loved him, and waited for him, shall appear with him in glory." Newton.

# MORNING.—MARCH 13.

GOD'S POWER AND BOUNTY.

When darkness long has veiled my mind, And smiling day once more appears, Then, my Redeemer, then I find, The folly of my doubts and fears.

Straight I upbraid my wandering heart, And blush that I should ever be Thus prone to act so base a part, Or harbour one hard thought of thee.

Oh! let me then at length be taught
What I am still so slow to learn,
That God is love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat,
But when my faith is sharply tried,
I find myself a learner yet,
Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide.

But, O my Lord, one look from thee, Subdues the disobedient will, Drives doubt and discontent away, And thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive,
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;
Be shame and self-abhorrence, mine.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

THE MARVELLOUS DOINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY.

JOB XXXVII.

5 God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

6 For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth: likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength.
7 He sealeth up the hand of every man; that all men may

know his work.

8 Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.

9 Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of

10 By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

11 Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: he scattereth his bright cloud:

12 And it is turned round about by his counsels: that

they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13 He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.

14 Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

15 Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

16 Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

17 How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?

18 Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?

19 Teach us what we shall say unto him; for we cannot

order our speech by reason of darkness.

20 Shall it be told him that I speak: if a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.

21 And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

22 Fair weather cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty.

23 Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice : he will not afflict.

24 Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that

are wise of heart.

### THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE AWAKE TO THE IMPORTANCE OF A SINGLE DAY.

"Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it." Waking in joyful hope, to this avowal, O God! we feel ourselves urged after enjoying a night of peaceful, luxurious repose. Not a little astonishing is the rest we are permitted to know. How wonderful and beneficial is its influence on the body,-how rich, how incomprehensibly great is the recreation which it affords for the soul; how salutary is its influence on all created beings! It ought to be regarded as nothing less than a great and glorious testimony of the ever-working providence, and of the love and faithful care of our heavenly father. So soon as a certain degree of weariness is experienced, all our powers are suspended, all human intelligence fades away. man has reached the limit of his strength, he can no longer speak, think, or move; he is of necessity brought to consign himself to the keeping of an Almighty Father, and the omnipotence of the great Creator closes his eyes, withdraws from him consciousness, arrests the motions, and puts with the body, the anxious, depressed, and care-worn spirit to rest. God deals with us while we sleep in a wonderful manner, bestowing upon us new courage, and new faculties for exertion when we The feeble, the invalid, the wounded, the exhausted, awake from refreshing sleep as if they

were new born, and nature renovated with them, for the Almighty gives command, "Let there be light, and there is light."

Mighty, bounteous, and mysterious Lord of all! who are we that can mark such wonders operating within ourselves, on each succeeding night-that thou keepest watch over us, and that thou enablest us to withdraw for a while from existence, and all its cares, and rest in peace and security? What are we? It has been thy good pleasure, most lovingly to take care of our souls. In deep humility we now apply ourselves to adore thy boundless love, and we feel a holy exultation while we reflect that it is by thee, we are endowed while we sleep, with new vital power, that it is thy bounty which grants us, when duly refreshed, another day of grateful and beneficial life. Such an addition to our mortal space is not unimportant. We are incapable of measuring or describing its exact value, or of numbering the fruits which, with thy favouring permission, it may be the means of producing for eternity. Neither can we calculate the total sum of blessings which may result from it, to conduce to our everlasting welfare. Gracious God! in a single day, if we duly exert our minds, much, very much may be accomplished to extend thy kingdom, to promote the welfare of our brethren, and to improve our own prospects of undying happiness in the world to come. We clearly perceive that within such a space, much is to be successfully attempted, but how deeply humiliating is the reflection which necessarily follows! It confounds and almost overwhelms us to recal the mournful and degrading truth, that too frequently we receive this valuable gift in vain. In our hands it is disparaged, or thrown away by our foolish hearts. We thoughtlessly waste the hours, and madly spurn the blessings they would bring. Father! who art in heaven, enlighten our wayward souls; strengthen our resolutions, that for this day and henceforward we may wisely and conscientiously avail ourselves of the added gift of thy love, and thus eventually render ourselves acceptable in thy sight. We pray that our hearts may be aroused from insensibility. Do not suffer us to sink to that state of utter degradation which can contentedly remain unmoved by thy bounty. Be it our pride and delight most zealously to raise our voices in thy praise, and to prove, through every day we yet remain on earth. our sincere gratitude to thee, the author of all good, more even by our actions than by our words

Henceforward it shall be our glad task, from day to day, to come before thee with prayers, to reflect on the blessings thou hast graciously bestowed, and to glorify thee in our every word, our every thought, our every deed. In accordance with these holy purposes, we desire to live through this morning, and to hallow it as well as the succeeding periods of this day, to thy honour and thy service. Guide us, O Lord, by thy blessed spirit, in a new road; grant us the faculty of making the best possible use of each passing hour; to enjoy it innocently, and to close it so that we may look back on it with joyful satisfaction when the shadows of night descend, and still more when the termination of this life is at hand, and we feel ourselves on the verge of eternity.

#### THE IRRESISTIBLE POWER OF FAITH.

Moses was enabled by the spirit of Christ to overcome. "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had re-spect unto the recompence of the reward." What but almighty grace could have given him such a complete victory? He gained entire dominion over sin, even when it came to tempt him with all the pleasures, and riches, and honours, of the world. He was made strong in faith: Christ, ruling in his heart, brought every high thought into subjection to himself; so that Moses not only resigned all his temporal advantages for Christ's sake, but, what natural men account a great paradox, he chose reproach, poverty, misery, rather than give up his interest in Christ. This is the victory which still overcometh the world, even our faith: for the New Testament furnishes us with such another instance of Christian heroism in the apostle of the Gentiles. He is giving an account of his own experience, and by what means he was now no longer under the law, but under grace; a sinner saved from the sentence of the broken law, and from all hope of being made righteous by his own personal keeping of it; I, through the law, says he, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God, &c. Once he was alive without the law, when he thought proudly of his own good life, that concerning the law he was blameless: but whom the commandment came in the power of the spirit, then it slew him, and killed all his former legal hopes. What he had trusted in before for life, he now found to be unto death: and Christ, faith in Christ, was the only means by which he saw he could live unto God, by his grace, and to his glory. By this faith he then experienced the power of the crucified and risen Jesus : I am in Christ, says he, crucified with him, truly and spiritually dead to sin, to self, to the world, by the virtue of his cross: nevertheless, by the same faith in the same Jesus I live; the spirit of life in him has quickened my spirit: he has given me a new birth unto the spiritual world, and has brought me to live upon the fulness of Jesus, as really now by faith as I hope to live upon him by sense in heaven;" "Yet not I:" I neither had it of myself, nor do I continue it by any act of my own, but Christ liveth in me:" and although I seem to live outwardly like other men, yet the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, depending upon

him every moment for fresh supplies of the spirit, to keep me in union and communion with the Father and the Son; and thereby he gives me to feel in my heart some of the blessings of that love of God in Christ which surpasseth knowledge.

Romaine.

# EVENING .-- MARCH 13.

THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS GOD'S AID AND CHRIST'S ADVOCACY.

Weary of wandering from my God,
And now made willing to return,
I hear, and bow me to the rod,
For him, not without hope, I mourn:
I have an Advocate above,
A friend before the throne of love.

O Jesus, full of pardoning grace, More full of grace than I of sin, Yet once again I seek thy face, Open thine arms, and take me in, And freely my backslidings heal, And love the faithless sinner still.

Thou know'st the way to bring me back,
My fallen spirit to restore;
O for thy truth and mercy's sake,
Forgive, and bid me sin no more;
The ruins of my soul repair,
And make my heart a house of prayer.

Ah! give me, Lord, the tender heart,
That trembles at the approach of sin,
A godly fear of sin impart,
Implant and root it deep within,
That I may dread thy gracious power,
And never dare offend thee more.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S STATUTES
DESIRED. PSALMS CXIX.

- 12 Blessed art thou, O Lord; teach me thy statutes.
  13 With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.
- 14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.
- 15 I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.
- 16 I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.
- 17 Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.
- 18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

  19 I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy command-
- 19 1 am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me. 20 My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy
- judgments at all times.
  21 Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do
- err from thy commandments.

  22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have
- kept thy testimonies.
  23 Princes also did sit and speak against me; but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

24 Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellers.

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me

according to thy word.

26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy

law graciously.

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I

laid before me.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me

not to shame.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou

shalt enlarge my heart.

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes: and I

shall keep it unto the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

# SICKNESS AND SORROW TEACH WISDOM, AND ARE EVIDENCES OF MERCY.

We read in the holy scriptures that "if you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with We humbly acknowledge the blessing even of the chastisements with which the Lord has ordained that we shall be visited; and if, severely as they may be felt, we mourn that they occur more frequently than heretofore, we shall not weakly despond, or tearfully repine at the decrees of God. Even with the toils and troubles they impose, such visitations are not unaccompanied with blessings. With a truly thankful heart, we will endeavour to reflect on the benefits we have derived from sickness, and sufferings in various shapes. Then shall we discover how salutary and necessary it is for us that affliction should have compelled us, at various periods, to withdraw from the distractions, the business, and the delusive vanities of the world. In silence, and in solitude, it has led us, on a bed of sickness, to enter into serious reflections on our own nature, and on our most important concerns, and to remember what we are. It has pressed forcibly on our minds that mortality is our lot, that here we are not always to remain, and that our lives are in the hand of God. Hence it follows, if we would act the part of rational beings, we ought to consider every new day of our lives, every prolongation of our earthly career, is the gift of fatherly love.

Afflictions and cares are necessary to keep our minds awake to what we owe to heaven. Is it likely that we should feel that gratitude for good

health which it ought to inspire; is it likely that we should endeavour to secure and preserve it by temperance, discretion, and sobriety, and by a constant exercise of prudent care; is it likely that we should avoid the sinner's path, and fly from wantonness and voluptuousness, from luxury and frivolity, if we had never been deprived of the blessing—if we had never known sickness? With grief, with shame, we must read how frequently we have been misled by the vigour of health. We have been betrayed into follies and excesses, which have in the end placed even our lives in jeopardy; while, on the other hand, often, very often, illness has given us security from greater sufferings, which our levity would have brought upon us, had not our evil dispositions been checked by those wiser reflections which were happily suggested on the bed of sickness. Had we not thus been rendered thoughtful, and compelled, as it were, to enter into ourselveshad we not thus been taught how to conquer an erring and easily deceived mind, how fatal might the consequences have proved! Added to this, the proofs of generous sympathy, of which we have found ourselves the object, from those who are dearest to us, how have they tended to warm and elevate the heart. By such instances of love how much more strangely were those ties bound, by which we had been previously united. How much more clearly did we perceive, how much more acutely did we feel, while profiting from the tender anxieties and faithful care of beloved companions, that God, in giving us such connection, had bestowed an immense blessing. indeed see, and we gratefully acknowledge, that much of the good which we may persuade ourselves we of right may claim, sprang in our bosoms, while we felt, in the hours of sickness, that the chastening hand of the Lord was upon The confession may be humiliating, but it is We feel that the ardent affection we bear to those who are near to us, our resignation and confidence in the goodness of the supreme being, our gratitude to him for the countless blessings which he has been pleased to bestow, our perfect submission to his all-wise decrees, our faith in his justice and his mercy, and, above all, our liveliest hopes of a better life, have been conferred and strengthened, rendered lastingindelible, on the sick bed, and in those hours when we were languishing in pain. The conviction of our own frailty the consequent expulsion of vain confidence in our own strength, we may

ascribe to the same cause. These things remembered, O God! our humblest thanks are now offered to thee, as well for the pains we have lamented, as for the comforts we have enjoyed; we desire, even from our punishments, to gain confidence in thy goodness.

THE SINNER MUST NOT, EVEN IN SORROW, DESPAIR OF GOD'S MERCY.

We are born to trouble, as our surest inheritance; and generally have such an experience of it before we leave the world, as to make a change desirable. Thus it pleases God to train us up for virtue and heaven by a succession of disappointments; thus would he render the objects of faith the more important and valuable. When we come into the world, weeping is the first presage of our misery; and our first knowledge of things very often begins with a sense of our own misfortunes. Such a condition of being at present is thought best for us by our all-wise Creator; a mixture of good and evil, by which the passions of joy and sorrow will be alternately raised, and which, without great caution, will become impediments to that good we might otherwise attain. Should our joy become extravagant, it would throw us into an habitual levity and impotence of mind; into such a temper as would prevent all great designs, all manly and noble pursuits, which require attention, patience, and zeal. On the other hand, indulged sorrow will dissipate the vigour of the mind, introduce such a discomposure as will spoil the relishes of life, and unfit us for the most necessary duties, Some occasions of sorrow will be very impressive, such aspersecution for the testimony of truth and a good conscience; slander for the firmness of our integrity, or the extension of our charity; the desertion of friends, and the defection of our children from true wisdom and virtue. Those occasions of sorrow will be painful, and deeply wound, where the mind is actuated by the fear of God and generous affections; by a love of truth and mankind.

It is the business of reason and religion to prevent the excess of our passions; but they are many times too strong for us. Their rise is often sudden, and their course impetuous, and we are borne away. But if the considerations of religion do not immediately check the torrent, they suggest what will support us as to the issue. That though the day be dark and lowering, the evening will be calm; though the storm falls heavy, the shelter is near at hand.

Milner.

# MORNING.—MARCH 14

RESIGN ALL EARTHLY JOY FOR CHRIST.

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with thee my heart to share;
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone
The Lord of every motion there:
Then shall my heart from earth be free;
When it has found repose in thee.

O hide this self from me, that I
No more, but Christ in me may live!
My vile affections crucify;
Let not one darling lust survive:
In all things may I nothing see,
Nothing desire or seek but thee.

Golden Treasury.

#### THE WORD OF GOD. REVELATION XIX.

1 I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen: Alleluia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made

herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The word of God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.

THE RICHES OF GOD'S TREASURE EXEMPLIFIED IN HIS GIFT OF THE GOSPEL.

We are the objects of God's peculiar care. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," are the words addressed by the Lord to his people. But, not only does this assurance apply to those for whom it was originally spoken—the same language is now held to us. The Lord, through the medium of the blessed scripture, assures us

that "he has loved us with an everlasting love." In that sacred word we gain an important pledge of future mercy. It makes us feel that we have secured to us a vast advantage, a mighty privilege over millions of men who have been born in darkness, and who still live in ignorance, or are bound down by mournful error, and soul-enthralling superstition. We have been privileged in our youth to learn the value of truth and virtue. and we have had many opportunities for improving ourselves in holy exercises. This boon ought to be regarded as of greater importance and value than if we had been born to crowns and kingdoms. For of what avail would all the pomp and riches of the universe be to us, if we possessed not, even here, that which is more important, happiness, and if we could not hope to realise still higher felicity beyond the grave. To know thee, O God! and to feel that we can live in thee, and that we may expect one day to be recognised among the heirs of thy kingdom, is infinitely more important than any gift, which the greatest sovereign on the face of the earth can promise or bestow.

Zealously then we must labour to impress more deeply upon our hearts, from time to time, the sincere belief in thee, and in him whom thou hast sent. To be faithful to thee, Father of Mercy, and God of all, is our duty, our interest, and shall be our delight and consolation. It is thine, Eternal Father, to soothe the aching heart, and to raise the drooping spirits of those that love thee, and who wish to know thy ways. From that gospel in which thy glory and thy benevolence are so conspicuously seen, our best comfort is derived. How dear, how important is its light to the benighted wanderer, how rich and nourishing is the comfort which it brings to the unhappy. For those who find themselves in tribulation, for those who in their humble homes are oppressed with sorrow, for those who have to deplore bitter losses, and, consequently, to endure severe poverty, its influence is most benign. It even suffices to cheer the sufferer in the last dreary stages of life's chequered career, and supplies new courage to meet the agonies of death.

It is, we feel, matter of just exultation that the blessed effects, and sustaining influences of the gospel, have been, in our own cases, so fully made known to us. To us it has proved of infinite value. When we hear the voice of our Lord, when we receive his heavenly gifts, we gain new animation, and are more cheered and supported

than we could hope to be, from possessing all the comforts of life, and all the riches of the Indies. These, with all they could administer, would still leave the mind unsatisfied. Oh! how largely do we feel our bosoms refreshed by that gospel which teaches us that thou knowest all our wants, and all our wishes. The assurance gives us satisfaction and content; under thy protection we know we cannot be other than safe. For this accept our thanks. Thou art the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever; thou art our shepherd, we are thy sheep; thou art our father, we are thy children; thou art our friend, our shield, our refuge in the storm, our all in all.

Precious to us, most precious is the gracious announcement that thou dost not disdain the humblest petition which is breathed with sincerity. Under any circumstances this must always inspire lively hope. Such an address to man is likely to fail. Man, weak man, is not content with that sincerity which will suffice for the great judge of all the earth. Man is slow to shew mercy to his fellows, but thou art all indulgence and compassion. Men too frequently misconstrue motives, and look with scorn and suspicion on the most upright intentions. Our God commits no such fault, can fall into no such error. He looks not at the language, but at the object—not at the person, but at the heart. We will then be ever thine; and, for all time to come, place our confidence in thee, for thou (can we too often repeat it?) "hast loved us with an everlasting love." The refulgence of thy celestial glory shines on as we proceed on our road; and, even in the gloomy night of death, it will cheer our souls and dry every tear. Thy blessed son, Almighty God, who was led like a lamb to the slaughter, will have pity on our wanderings; our errors will be pardoned, and we shall be numbered with those who have been redeemed by his blood.

#### THE CHRISTIAN WILL GUARD AGAINST LITTLE SINS.

He that is grown in grace and the knowledge of Christ, esteems no sin to be little or contemptible, none fit to be cherished or indulged. For it is not only inconsistent with the love of God, to entertain any indecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases him; but he always remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things, whither the grace of God hath already brought him: he thinks of his prayers and tears, his restless nights and his daily fears, his late escape and his present danger, the ruins of his former state, and the difficulty and imperfect reparations of this new, his proclivity and aptness to vice, and unnatural averseness and uneasy inclinations to the strictness of holy living; and when these are considered truy, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any beginnings

of a state of life contrary to that, which, with so much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies. he hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for heaven. And so it must be; for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say as Lot did, when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, "Alas! Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?" And it is not, therefore, to be entertained because it is little; for it is the more without excuse, if it be little: the temptations to it are not great, the allurements not mighty, the promises not ensuaring, the resistance easy; and a wise man considers it is a greater danger to be overcome by a little sin, than by a great one; a greater danger, I say; not directly, but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person. For he that cannot overcome a small crime, is in the state of infirmity so great, that he perishes infallibly, when he is arrested by the sins of a stronger temptation: but he that easily can, and yet will not, he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kiss the apples of paradise, or feast himself with the parings, since he is, by some displeasing instrument, affrighted from glutting himself with the forbidden fruit in ruder and bigger instances. But the well-grown Christian is curious of his newly-trimmed soul; and like a nice person with clean clothes, is careful that no spot or stain sully the virgin whiteness of his robe; whereas another, whose albs of baptism are sullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what path he treads; and a shower of dirt changes not his state, who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity. It makes men negligent and easy, when they have an opinion, or certain knowledge, that they are persons extraordinary in nothing, that a little care will not mend them, that another sin cannot make them much worse; but it is a sign of a tender conscience and a reformed spirit, when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit on its guard, when too free a merriment is wiped off with a sigh, and a sad thought, and a severe recol-lection, and a holy prayer. Polycletus was wont to say, "that they had work enough to do, who were to make a curious picture of clay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar." A man's spirit is naturally careless of baser and uncostly materials: but if a man be to work in gold, then he will save the filings of his dust, and suffer not a grain to perish: and when a man hath laid his foundations in precious stones, he will not build vile matter, stubble, and dirt on it. So it is in the spirit of a man; if he have built on the rock, Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good stature in Christ, he will not easily dishonour his building, or lose his labours, by an incurious entertainment of vanities and little instances of sin; which as they can never satisfy any lust or appetite to sin, so they are like a fly in a box of ointment, or like little follies to a wise man; they are extremely full of dishonour and disparagement, they disarray man's soul of his virtue, and dishonour him for cockle-shells and baubles, and tempt to a greater folly; which every man, who is grown in the knowledge of Christ therefore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse with a fear as great as his hopes of heaven are; and knows that the entertainment of small sins does but entice a man's resolutions to disband; they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in deatn.

Jeremy Taylor.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 14.

THE WONDERS OF CREATION, AND GOD'S GOODNESS.

Give thanks to God the sovereign Lord; His mercies still endure, And be the King of kings adored, His truth is ever sure.

What wonders hath his wisdom done! How mighty is his hand! Heaven, earth, and sea, he framed alone: How wide is his command!

Fig. 1. The sun supplies the day with light:

How bright his counsels shine!

Fig. 2. The moon and stars adorn the night:

His works are all divine.

He saw the nations dead in sin:

He felt his pity move:

How sad the state the world was in!

How boundless was his love!

He sent to save us from our woe;
His goodness never fails;
From death and hell, and every foe:
And still his grace prevails.

Give thanks to God the heavenly king, His mercies still endure, Let the whole earth his praises sing; His truth is ever sure.

SEEK THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND WAIT THE COMING
OF THE SAVIOUR. LUKE XII.

29 Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have heard of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God: and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

34 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh

at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his houshold, to give them their portion of meat in due season.

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh

shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be

beaten with many stripes,

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

THE BEAUTIES OF CREATION AND THE MEANS USED BY GOD IN THEIR PRODUCTION.

The return of the gental season of the year brings with it new evidences of the goodness of God. "Sun stand thou still" was his fiat in answer to the prayer of one of his great servants, engaged in a most important work; for us, he commands the mornings and evenings to advance. For our comfort nature revives, the air becomes

serene, and flowrets bloom again.

The days lately so brief and dreary, now begin to lengthen, and wear the brightness of spring. The glorious sun shortens the tedious nights of winter, and all nature seems to exult in renewed existence. The change in the temperature we feel most grateful; we breathe more freely, and life altogether becomes dearer, more valuable, more affluent of ease and enjoyment than it has been of late. The toils and annoyance brought by the inclement season, are lost in the blythe anticipation of those pleasures, which a few weeks will again place within our reach, and those recreations which we no longer seek while the winter continues. So charming a prospect elevates our minds, and makes us rejoice in the present, forgetful of, or exulting over the past. Looking on the fair scene now opening around us in every direction, to charm the admiring eye, it is impossible for our thoughts to rest upon it without ascending higher, and gratefully contemplating the might and majesty of the good Supreme-without feeling that our Lord is bountiful.

How can we sufficiently admire the all-adorning hand which so exquisitely connects, and so magnificently arranges the superb wonders we are permitted to gaze upon! He provides what is needful for all his creatures; but Oh! how numerous are the blessings which his lavish kindness

bestows upon man!

While we indulge in these reflections, true it is, that some things may be recounted, in the vast and beautiful system of nature, which may give us sad misgivings, and suggest serious causes for sorrow and alarm. That which appears most fair, is often found associated with something from which we shrink with loathing or with terror. In the ordinary course of things, a bright and serene day is not unfrequently followed by one of gloom and tempest. The vast unclouded azure heaven no more delights our gratified vision; but the sky is clad in sable threatening clouds, or rent with the forked lightning's glare. Objects which nature has only just produced, are destroyed by the withering drought, by formidable hail-stones, by sudden inundations, or by raging storms. But these occurrences, which spread desolation far and wide, are all in the course ordained from the first, by Eternal Wisdom, when he framed the laws under which the universe was to be governed. And here it may be remarked, that at the point we have reached, the work of the Almighty does not stop. New life, new activity, new order, spring from the ruin we deplore; nature revives, and triumphs over destruction.

How pregnant is this spectacle with saving knowledge!-how important is the lesson which it teaches the soul of man! These things beheld -the restoration of harmony and beauty witnessed, shall we accuse our Creator for having included destruction among the instruments it is his pleasure to employ? From seeing these and their effects, we the more rejoice in the calm and glorious scene which succeeds; and, could our souls know such full enjoyment as must eventually be theirs, if doubt, and grief, and terror, had always been to them unknown? Why do we look out for spring with such an ardour of joyous expectation? Because we are prepared to hail its coming, by experience of the clouds, and rain, and hurricanes we have witnessed at the close of the year. The dulness, the irksome solitude which we cannot escape, give a higher zest to the charms of society. Its gay varieties elevate our spirits in proportion as they were previously depressed by the monotonous gloom of which we

complained.

Keenly awake to the change in our feelings, we bless that kind providence which has diversified life with objects, scenes, and emotions so astonishingly different. As the gladsome spring advances, uneasiness gives place to a sense of lively pleasure, rendered all the more varied from the contrast supplied by the past. Everything charms the attentive eye; and Oh! how wonderful is the resurrection of nature, now displayed to mortal view! How adorable is the creative power of God, seen in all its magnificence! While our attention rests on this spectacle, we can more clearly understand the deep meaning of the important precept, "Let all the earth fear the Lord; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood still."

The seasons, as they pass away in long succession, seem to strengthen and augment our confidence in the power and wisdom of the Almighty. His increasing bounty is exemplified to us by the return of every spring. We see that he always sends sunshine after rain, and, to the vegetable world, new life after death. this, may not the Christian, as the winter of his life comes on, look cheerfully out for the return of spring? For us, a new, a never-ending summer will yet open. If we are not again to witness the glories of the opening year on earth, that felicity will be ours beyond the grave. In this happy conviction we now serenely compose ourselves to rest, assured that we shall, in any case, rise again, in renewed strength, to own the kindly care, and exult in the protection of our God.

#### REVELATION TO BELIEVERS.

When oeu-vers shall come to the end of their faith, they shall not only be thus saved from all possible evil, but who can conceive what their actual enjoyments will then be? To be saved from all sin, from all the effects of sin, is a great mercy, yet it is only a part of our salvation. But looking at the world lying in wickedness, beholding the variety of pains and miseries in it, from which no one is exempt—no state of life free from them—the palace as full of them as the cottage—kingdoms convulsed—infidelity spreading its poisonous influence, and attempting to destroy all good order and government—old age bringing its infirmities, and death hastening—it is certainly a great deliverance, that none of those evils can approach us any more. Blessed be God the Saviour for this great mercy! It is through his grace that his kingdom of glory will be kept in perfect peace; no evil, no fear of evil, shall for one moment interrupt the happiness of his

subjects. But what is this, compared to the actual enjoyment of all possible good! Who is able to declare fully what this will be at the appearing of Jesus the great God? We must wait for the full manifestation of the sons of God: but yet there is a great deal revealed, which belongs to us and to our children; and if we can read in faith, with prayer, and with a continual dependance upon the teaching and application of the Holy Spirit, he will give us to form our hearts and lives upon the certainty of what he has revealed: for our conversation will then be in heaven, and we shall have both the knowledge and also the experience, of heavenly things, growing according to our faith. The word Revela-tion signifies taking off the veil or covering from any thing, that it may be seen clearly: in the scripture sense, it is removing the veil from heavenly things, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, creating spiritual senses to exercise upon those heavenly things; of which the natural man can have no just ideas: for he cannot understand nor receive the things that are freely given to us of God: but he that is taught of God, has evidence given him of the reality and of the blessedness of those things which are revealed, and by faith enjoyed. When such a one reads what God said to Abraham, "After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;" he reads it for himself: he makes the promise his own, and trusts in it as stedfastly as if God had spoken it to him by a voice from heaven; for so is he warranted to apply it by the apostle. Now, it was not written for his sake alone, but for us also; no scripture being of any private interpretation. The gift of grace to Abraham was nothing short of an infinite good—for it was God himself: "I will be thy God."

Romaine.

# MORNING.—MARCH 15.

THE LAMB OF GOD THAT TAKETH AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD.

Come let us join our cheerful songs With angels' round the throne; Ten thousand thousand are their tongues, But all their joys are one.

"Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry, "To be exalted thus;"

"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply, "For he was slain for us."

Let all that dwell above the sky, And air, and earth, and seas, Conspire to lift his glories high, And speak his endless praise.

The whole creation joins in one,
To bless the sacred name
Of Him that sits upon the throne,
And to adore the Lamb.

Golden Treasury.

THE LAMB AND THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LAMB. REVELATIONS XIV.

1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many

waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the

voice of harpers harping with their harps.

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are

without fault before the throne of God.

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains

of waters.

8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and re-

ceive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark

f his name

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a

golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the

earth; and the earth was reaped.

CHRIST'S AID WILL BE GRANTED, IF IMPLORED,
TO SAVE MAN FROM SIN.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those which are in Christ Jesus." These were the impressive words of the Apostle Paul. We feel their importance, and rejoice, O God! that thou hast been pleased to vouchsafe to us the blessing of being born Christians, and in a Christian land. Happy, indeed, are we, to have been, in the earlier stages of our existence, placed under the influence of the doctrine of Christ. To this

we are largely indebted—to this we, in fact, owe every thing that can enlighten, and rationally cheer the mind. All that we experience which glads us—every comfort which calms the troubled soul—every timely encouragement that animates the heart with sacred hope, and strengthens the aspiring mind, in its struggle with the vanities of a wicked world, we derive from this source; and, above all, that beatific communion with the Redeemer of man, which renders us the children of his love, and the heirs of eternal bliss.

Lord! we know thee, and know in whom we believe. We know that he who fears thee, and that does righteousness, is agreeable to God. We know how holy are thy commandments, and thy law. Gracious Lord! to us thou art truly dear. In many respects, we may fear, we are still surrounded by error, and not free from sin; yet the lively wish is awake in our hearts to offer thee homage—humble, ardent, and sincere, and to render ourselves in some degree worthy of thy favouring regard, and of thy blessing.

But still must we lament that we often mournfully wander from the right path; frequently are

which we can joyfully advance.

we self-condemned, when we review the weakness of our hearts; and in various ways are we found sinning against thee. Yes, this we acknowledge with shame and sorrow. Too often it is abundantly obvious, even to ourselves, that we are not worthy to be called thy children. Happily, however, when we are thus cast down, it is thy good pleasure to enlighten and correct thy erring worshippers, by the powerful assistance of thy Son. To him we really belong, provided we only give ourselves up to him with sincere devotion, and willingly devote our powers to his service. In Christ we will therefore desire to live. His blessed Spirit shall also become ours; his road to glory shall at last be found a level path to us, on

Ever may this be the most anxious object of our hearts. Gracious Saviour! thou knowest that we love thee. Let thy love, such as we feel it, not prove merely a pleasing effort of imagination, a passing sensation. Grant that it may remain with us, a fixed and constant sentiment, to the end of our lives, that it may be found proof against trials, and conspicuously manifested by the faithful zeal with which we give ourselves up to thy service—by our eagerness to proclaim thy glory—by our resolution to avoid in the slightest degree transgressing thy commandments, and by our walking in thy ways, in

solitude as in society—in our youth as in our old age. This part we desire constantly to act, as well among sinners as among those who profess to revere thy name—in the days of misfortune, as

well as in the time of prosperity.

Strongly, imperatively, are we bound to profess our faith with resolution and fidelity, and to fulfil the purpose of our creation, by that love in which thou hast rendered up thyself for us, and suffered for our sake the most ignominious treatment, and a painful death. Moreover, the sublime example which thou hast placed before our eyes, the mighty works which thou hast performed—the word thou hast proclaimed, and the pledge which thou hast graciously been pleased to give to us, bind us to this by a sure and lasting covenant.

Incessantly, then, we must labour, as Christians, to make our calling and election sure. This day let it be our care, to help on our conversion with the most anxious attention, while the example of a crucified Saviour is kept unceasingly before our eyes. That example is an affecting, a sacred, and elevating monument of thy faithfulness and compassion, which, through eighteen centuries, has already warmed, inspired, and sustained the hearts of his true followers with the pure, unaffected enthusiasm of heroic virtue; which comforts those who are suffering, supplies new strength to those who are weak, supports those who are tottering, and diffuses the blessings of love, forbearance, meekness, patience, and devotion, among the nations of the earth.

Thrice happy are we to be acquainted with this important truth; and, awake to all its glory, thy image, Oh merciful Saviour! is never absent from our souls. As a trustworthy guide, which cannot be deceived, thou guidest us through the dangers of this life; thou animatest our zeal; thou sustainest our courage; thou confirmest our faith; and thus we gain strength to overcome the indolence of our hearts. Thy aid, thy continued aid, we implore. We will covet it to the end of our lives, and refresh and confirm our souls, by constantly making it the theme of our holy meditation. So shall we, even in the hour of death, constantly hope that for us there will be no condemnation.

GOD WILLING TO BE SOLICITED FOR MERCY.

When the apostle sends us to a throne of grace, he reminds us that he, who sits upon this throne, has mercy and grace at his disposal; that he has removed out of the way all impediments to the exercise of his mercy; that he can now be gracious to a world of rebellious sinners in a way consistent

with his honour, and shew himself a God of mercy without tarnishing the glory of his other perfections. The awful display of his infinite holiness and fearful justice, which Jehovah gave to the universe upon the cross, can leave none of his creatures at liberty to suspect that he has ceased to be the hater of iniquity, when he redeems from destruction and carries to heaven the sinful children of men. They are as much the trophies of his holiness and justice, as they are the monuments of his mercy and grace. The splendour, which their salvation throws around his throne, was unknown to the creation before they were redeemed, and will for ever eclipse the glory of all his other works. Hence God can now pour upon us the richest blessings of his goodness, and at the same time bring glory to himself by the exercise of his mercy. He can give us, in the most free and honourable manner, pardon for our sin, strength for our weakness, and comfort for our sorrow.

The expression used by the apostle tells us also that God has not only mercy and grace at his disposal, but that he is willing to bestow them. The place, on which he sits, declares his willingness. If he represented himself to us upon a seat of judgment, a tribunal of justice, we might conclude that he was ready to discharge the offices of a judge, that he was sitting there to do justice and to execute judgment. When therefore he leaves this tribunal, and presents himself to us upon a throne of grace, we may surely conclude that he is ready to shew grace and mercy; that he is willing to receive the petitions of the sinful and to dispense help to the needy.

This expression shews us also the manner, in which the Lord exercises his mercy and grace; it tells us that he dis-

penses these blessings freely and royally.

He dispenses them freely. If God is a sovereign on a throne, it cannot be consistent with his honour to receive aught for his benefits. An earthly monarch considers it a degradation to take a price of his subjects for his favours; will the great Sovereign of heaven then demand a price for his mercy of such poor, mean subjects, as we are? No; all his acts of mercy are acts of grace, of pure, unmerited grace; they must be so, or we could never receive them. Whatever is required, we have nothing to give; for sin and misery are all, that we can call our own.

God is ready to bestow his grace royally, magnificently, as well as freely. When he describes himself as a king, seated on a throne of grace, he assures us that he will give like a king; that he will bestow upon us not a few trifling gifts, but such as are answerable to his greatness and magnificence. We dishonour him therefore, if we do not expect great things at his hands. We must not regard the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as a common benefactor. He is ready to give us not merely mercy to deliver, but grace to exalt us. He is willing not only to lift us out of the pit, but to advance us to a throne.

But here it may be said, "What if God has mercy and grace at his disposal, and is ready to give them thus freely and royally, is he not a being too great and too high to be approached by me? I need these blessings, and God may be ready to bestow them according to his sovereign will; but where is the sinner, who will dare to go to so high a God, and ask for them?" The expression, which the apostle uses, meets this objection also. It tells us that the Lord is willing to be asked for his mercy and grace, and that too by the meanest sinner.

Bradley.

## EVENING.—MARCH 15.

PEACE ON EARTH THROUGH CHRIST.

My dying Saviour and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin:
Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
And cleanse, and keep me clean.

Wash me, and make me thus thy own; Wash me, and mine thou art: Wash me, but not my feet alone, My hands, my head, my heart.

Th' atonement of thy blood apply,
Till faith to sight improve;
Till hope shall in fruition die,
And all my soul be love.

For ever here my rest shall be, Close to thy bleeding side; 'Tis all my hope, and all my plea, "For me the Saviour died."

Golden Treasury.

SINCERITY AND CHARITY MUST BE USED BY THE CHRISTIAN, COLOSSIANS III.

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall

ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the

children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the

name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they

be discouraged.

22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in single-

ness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord,

and not unto men;
24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward

of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

SINCERITY, AND LOVE FOR OUR FELLOW-CREATURES, THE SOURCE OF COMFORT ON EARTH.

As "God is a Spirit, who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth," those who bow before his throne, and hope for his blessing, must approach it with sincerity. "Thou hypocrite! first cast the beam out of thine own eye," is the word, the admonishing word of Jesus. He who acts upon this valuable precept of our wise and gracious Lord, is not only more agreeable to the Most High, but the serenity of his own hearthis joy and peace on earth, are less frequently disturbed, than are those of men who employ themselves in casting out the mote from a brother's eye, while they forget to chastise their own vices, and consider themselves as the innocent party. Let it be our object, in every situation, to search our own bosoms, and labour to improve ourselves. So long as we surrender our wayward hearts to the sensations of jealousy and anger, so long as we suffer ourselves to be implacable and obstinate, we shall embitter our lives, and throw far from us those joys which thy bounty, O Lord! has prepared for our solace, and placed within our reach. We earnestly, most sincerely desire, that we may ultimately succeed in removing the beam from our eyes, which may there be found, and in cultivating none but feelings of meekness and benevolence, till we, in some degree, resemble our blessed Saviour, who never reviled when he was reviled, never threatened when he was suffering. The Christian soldier ought resolutely to follow his glorious captain. It is not for him to suppose that to do so is beyond his powers. Is he to sit down inactive, and declare himself unable to become like

Jesus? Having before his eyes the sublime, the inspiring example, and free access to the means of salvation, he may be able to imitate the Redeemer, if he is sincere in his desire to combat and vanquish the wicked propensities of his heart—if he can keep down his evil passions. Yes, if we guard ourselves with proper care, remembering before God our manifold deficiencies, and the numerous blessings we are permitted to enjoy, in the love of those who are dear to us, and in all the social comforts which we may rejoice it is ours to know, we shall not fail.

To a mind not carefully disciplined, it would be difficult to be always awake to duty; to preserve meekness, indulgence to others, and general placability. Temptation is frequently very strong, and our hearts are lamentably weak. But ought we—can we, as thinking beings, give up that heart in which God established the faculty of loving, of revering what is good?—ought we to despair of ourselves? No: well aware that God is powerful in the weak, when they earnestly, but with all humility and confidence, claim the aid of his protecting hand, and implore his gracious assistance, by expecting, we will deserve it.

And are we not acting like enemies to ourselves, if we resign our thoughts to sin? Are we not abandoning happiness in this life, while we foster propensities and feelings which undermine our everlasting peace? We perhaps, never had reason to regret having treated any act of thoughtlessness, committed by those about us. with indulgence. So, if, when there has been a difference of opinion, we manifested a placable and peaceful disposition, and checked our rising indignation, and applied ourselves to stay the progress of discord, the reflection has subsequently been a source of sweetest comfort. But frequently have we lamented, with shame and deep confusion, that we have done the contrary of all this. Have we not suffered severely in our own reflections, when we have, after this fashion, been carried away to sin? What days, in the course of our journey through life, have thus been wasted?-days in which no peace, no joy could find a place in our agitated bosoms. Bitter, it may be rancorous feelings, prevailing, rendered every labour still more irksome, and interfered with every enjoyment.

These things we remember with regret, and sincere penitence. Oh! then, let us solemnly vow, in thy august presence, most gracious God our Father! who hast created us in thine own

image, and destined us to immortal happiness, that we will endeavour to avoid whatever may frustrate, or in any way interfere with thy gracious design; that especially we will not excite our brethren, by our asperity, to visit us with anger; that so we may avoid casting a further gloom over our lives, and become virtually the enemies of our own peace. Grant us firmness, O Lord! to keep our vow, and permit us to pass our days in love and charity with all mankind.

CHRIST DIED TO CURE MAN OF SELFISHNESS.

Although the interposition of Christ on our behalf proceeded solely from love, it was nevertheless designed to answer a great and gracious purpose. The apostle accordingly points out to us in the text, the end which Christ had in view in dying and rising again for man. It was this; "that they, which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him, which died for them and rose again."

This language plainly implies that by nature we are all living to ourselves; that our own will is the law of our actions, and our own gratification, our own interest or pleasure, the end of them. It is not thus with some of the rational creatures of God, neither was it always thus with man. Our selfishness is one of the sad fruits of our depravity. It is a part of that spiritual death, that alienation from God, which sin has spread over the soul, and which nothing but a new birth unto righteousness can remove. It is directly opposed to our happiness, for all the happiness of the creature is derived from the service of the Creator, and all his blessedness flows from a conformity to the divine law and will. It is also in the highest degree hateful to God. We shew by it that we do not consider him as having any claim on us or our services. It is an open denial of his authority as the Sovereign of the universe. It is an act of rebellion.

Sovereign of the universe. It is an act of rebellion. Now the design of Christ in dying for man, was to root out this selfish principle from his heart; to save him from it; to bring the rebel back again to the forsaken service of his heavenly King. The gospel finds us in a state of bondage to Satan, and it delivers us from it; but it does not leave us lawless; it does not make us our own masters. It sanctions and strengthens all the original obligations, which we are under as creatures to serve the Being who formed us, and it gives him a new and a more endearing claim to our services. He has bought us with a price; he therefore deems us his own, and calls upon us to glorify him in our body and our spirits, which are his. He points to the cross and the tomb, and tells us that it was "for this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living." Shall we then hesitate to admit the lawfulness of a title, obtained by so much degradation and suffering? Shall we rob the blessed Jesus of the purchase of his blood? Shall we keep back from its proprietor so worthless a possession, after it has been purchased by him at so costly a price? No. We are not our own. We cannot be our own. If we have ever tasted of redeeming grace, we shall not even wish to be our own. As for living to ourselves or to the world, the very thought will be our grief and our shame. It will be the first wish of our heart to be entirely devoted to God; to consecrate to him every action of our life and every thought of our heart; to give to him every moment as it flies.

Bradley.

#### MORNING.-MARCH 16.

THE COUNSEL AND HELPING HAND OF GOD NECESSARY TO MAN.

> Be thou my counsellor, My pattern, and my guide; And thro' this desert land, Still keep me near thy side, O let my feet Ne'er run astray, Nor rove, nor seek The crooked way.

Should all the hosts of death, And pow'rs of hell unknown, Put their most dreadful form Of rage and mischief on; I shall be safe. For Christ displays Superior pow'r,

And guardian grace.

Golden Treasury.

GOD'S AID CRAVED TO SAVE THE CHRISTIAN FROM THE SNARES AND TROUBLES OF LIFE. PSALM XXV.

1 Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them

be ashamed which trangress without cause.

4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. 5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the

God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

6 Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach

sinners in the way

9 The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity; for

it is great. 12 What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he

teach in the way that he should choose. 13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit

the earth.

14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

15 Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.

20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

THANKS FOR REFRESHING REST DURING THE NIGHT.

AND DUTY TO BE PERFORMED IN THE DAY.

In their journey through life, overwhelming sorrows will sometimes render men incapable of taking natural rest. "My bed shall comfort me. my couch shall ease my complaint," the mourner exclaims with poor Job in vain. Afflicted in the evening, those who languish in despondency, in vain lay their weary heads on their pillows. Sleep comes not at their bidding, and a new morning dawns on their feverish eyes, and finds them still wretched, pensive, and awake; no comfort, no relief having been afforded to the labouring breast. They have been agitated by tormenting dreams, if for a moment they sunk to slumber, or they have writhed in restless anguish on their couch, longing, but in vain, for repose.

God of mercy! comfort all those wretched beings who at the opening of this day raise their tearful eyes to thee, and thou, Almighty Saviour, regard with compassion the mourners whose sighs are poured into thine ear, and deign to accept the tribute of our thankfulness for the favour we have to acknowledge in being permitted again to awake in perfect health and renovated strength. May we never forget this bounty, nor turn it aside by our culpable follies, or our insatiate craving for sensual pleasures. May we also be not less on our guard against earth-born cares, which are unworthy a place in the heart of him who looks upward to a home in the sky. O! may we be wise before it is too late, and never sin against the glory of our Lord, by throwing away on guilty enjoyments, that vigour which it has been his

good pleasure to bestow.

Every thing we see must teach the observant mind, that God beholds us when we sin. He knows all our doings. He that formed our admirably constructed eyes, we may rest assured can see; he that constructed our curiously formed ears, can hear. The author of all our knowledge, the source of all our noblest faculties, cannot himself be deficient in intelligence, and must know our weaknesses as they arise, as he knows our wants before they occur. To him all our actions must be exposed; and when he looks upon our wanderings, will he not punish them? He has given us discernment to know good from evil, and must we not expect that his righteous decisions will attest that he can distinguish between them? To entertain on such a subject doubt for a moment, would be to trifle with conscience, and to abdicate common sense.

Our actions then ought all to be so regulated, that we may not wish to shrink from his piercing glance. Having this in his mind, the pious Christian cheerfully commences his labours for the day, and only covets to render himself useful to his fellow creatures. It enters not into his mind that here he is to live only for enjoyment and for himself alone. He aspires to use that life well which his Creator has bestowed, and thus to prove himself worthy of the blessing of existence. will aim at gladly performing that task which is assigned to us by the Providence of God. It will be for us, in the course of this day, to avail ourselves of every means that may come within our reach, for promoting his glory, and, if possible, advancing the happiness of our fellow men. To us and those who are near and dear to us, grant, all bountiful Jehovah, the discernment, health and strength, necessary to useful exertion, that each of us may accomplish some good work, and faithfully perform that duty which it was thy pleasure to confide to his particular care.

Most especially we solicit thy gracious aid, that we may live here in such a way, as shall prove we are not unmindful of our future destiny, Readily and cheerfully let us study to satisfy all the obligations which attach to our situations, as rendering them to our Omnipotent Creator, and not to man. Proceeding with our day's work in this spirit, we shall be guarded against the weakness of too entirely giving up our minds to the concerns of this world, to the neglect of our souls.

For the rest enjoyed last night, for the solace and enjoyment which have been ours to day, for the mercies which are extended to us from moment to moment, our hearts ought to glow with unaffected gratitude. To lose sight of these, were the height of meanness, as well as folly. Teach us then, Oh God, our Heavenly Father, to do thy will; and feeble children of nature as we are, let us kindly exhort each other that we walk prudently in the path which is marked for us to tread, lest, unhappily, some of our number should go astray, stumble, or fall, so that we may be compelled to look back on our conduct with shame, confusion and remorse, to the end of our lives.

Should a bountiful parent be neglected, a kind friend forgotten? Surely not. O, may thy forbearance never cause us to fall into negligence or false security. On the contrary, let the various proofs of thy goodness and compassion, arouse

us to the most zealous and energetic exertions in the cause of my soul. If "the ox knoweth its owner, and the ass its master's crib," ought not immortal spirits to recognise the kindness of their immortal author? May our minds then be constantly awake to discharge our several duties faithfully, and with cheerful good-will; and to use our time, and employ our faculties, as may best become those who glory in the Christian name.

Even the brute creation express, in their way, joy and gratitude for the bounty of their Maker. Not more insensible than them would we be found. On each returning day, when we receive the gift of a new existence, with all our faculties renewed, we ought, in grateful adoration, to feel that we should deserve to lose them all, if our Maker decide to enter into judgment with us; that to our own discernment we owe nothing, but to his mercy all we prize; and therefore it must ever be our most sacred duty, to render ourselves sure of his continued favour, by a wise and proper use of the benefits it may be his will to grant, and by constantly endeavouring to adhere to a course of virtue. O Lord, to this end grant us now and henceforth the assistance of thy holy spirit, and guard our hearts against fickleness and want of confidence in thee.

#### THE GLORY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

The absolute dominion of God, as the universal Proprietor and Lord, is an object which deserves most devoutly to be celebrated. It is, in fact, the frequent theme of the praises dictated under the inspiration of the Spirit in the sacred oracles. But there is another of the dominions of God, considered in relation to his saints-an empire of knowledge and of love, whose administration is entrusted to his Son-which is celebrated in still sublimer strains, and forms the principal theme of the New Testament. This is emphatically denominated the kingdom of heaven, or that kingdom which the God of heaven should set up, given to "the saints of the Most High," which is to be of everlasting duration, and never to be succeeded by another. Whether the Psalm before us is intended to describe this species of rule and authority, in distinction from the other, I shall not undertake to determine: but as these divine compositions are unquestionably frequently employed in portraying the kingdom of Christ or the Messiah. it is hoped it will not be deemed improper to consider the words in that light.

Let us direct our thoughts, then, for a short season, to the glory of the kingdom of Christ. With this view, it may be proper to reflect on the following particulars:—

1. The glory of it is manifest in its origin and the method by which it was acquired. It had its origin in ineffable mercy, under the direction of perfect wisdom and rectitude. It coupied the thoughts, and was the object of the counsels of the Eternal, before the heavens were stretched out, or the foundation of the earth was laid. It formed the centre of the Divine designs, and the ultimate point to which every other purpose of God was directed. As it was designed to be the spiritual reign of God over the mind, and at the same

time to be an unanimous, harmonious kingdom, in which the sovereign and the subjects are always understood to be of the same nature, it was necessary, in order to its establishment, that God should become incarnate; it was necessary, not only for the redemption of his church, but also for the purpose of their being governed as they were intended to be governed. Ere the government could be placed "on his shoulder," it was necessary for the Messiah to be "a child

born and a son given."

Again, since in this kingdom the "tabernacle of God" was to be "with men," and he was to dwell amongst them, and such a condescension of mercy would have been utterly unbecoming the "blessed and only Potentate," without a single reparation to the divine honour tarnished by rebellion, it was requisite a sacrifice for sin should be made, worthy of the occasion, which could no where be procured but by "the offering of the body of Christ, once for all." The inefficiency of the typical sacrifices under the law proclaimed the necessity of one of intrinsic validity and infinite value. Thus the foundation of this empire was laid in the incarnation and atonement of the Son of God; and the solidity and extent of its foundations, great as they are, are but proportioned to the majesty and duration of the edifice.

Every battle of the warrior, says the Prophet Isaiah, "is with confused noise, and with garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." The kingdom of which we speak is acquired by conquest, but of a nature totally different from military conquest. The weapons employed in achieving it, are purely spiritual-the burning of conviction, the light of truth, the fire of love. The simple testimony of Christ, the publication of the gospel by the "foolishness of preaching," have produced the most wonderful changes in the world, far beyond those which have been effected by violence or the sword. Before these simple but efficacious instruments, the powers of darkness have been overcome; "Satan has fallen like lightning from heaven;" temples have been overturned, oracles have been struck dumb, the arm of persecuting power has been withered; and men have, in every part of the world, passed through chains, and racks, and fires, into the kingdom of God. Heavenly truth, love, and wisdom, have grappled with all the powers of falsehood and sophistry, combined with all the blandishments and terrors of the world, and have gained decisive victory. From the smallest beginnings, and by the most contemptible instruments to human appearance, the gospel, by "commending itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God," hath triumphed over all opposition, and is still going forth "conquering and to conquer." Hall's Works.

## EVENING.—MARCH 16.

GRACE CONQUERS AND CHASES UNBELIEF.

The souls, enlight'ned from above,
With joy receive the word;
They see what wisdom, pow'r, and love
Shines in their dying Lord.

The vital favour of his name Restores their fainting breath; But unbelief perverts the same To guilt, despair, and death.

Fill God diffuse his graces down, Like show'rs of heavenly rain, In vain Apollos sows the ground, And Paul may plant in vain.

Golden Treasury

# WILL CUT OFF THOSE WHO FORSAKE HIM. JOSHUA, XXIII.

2 And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and striken in age:

3 And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your

God is he that hath fought for you.

- 4 Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even to the great sea westward.
- 5 And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you.

6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn

not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them:

8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done

unto this day.

9 For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

10 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised

you.

11 Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

12 Else if he do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go unto them, and they to you:

13 Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good

land which the LORD your God hath given you.

14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord

your God hath given you.

16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

# THE WEAKNESS OF DELAYING REPENTANCE ON FRIVOLOUS EXCUSES.

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" God forbid—such is not the will or the Lord, whose wonderful plans no mortal can comprehend so great is his forbearance and his

mercy. He maketh his sun to shine on the evil as well as the good, and permits his rain to fall on the just as well as the unjust, and has given his only son to be offered as a sacrifice for the sins of all. The mercy of God ought ever to fill our souls with wonder, and with the earnest emotions of gratitude and joy. Let it fill our bosoms with new courage, and wake in our sluggish hearts new zeal in the cause of salvation, with fervent love for our father who is in heaven. The most painful cares we can know, are allayed, our bitterest griefs softened by divine goodness, and our most tormenting fears set at rest; that is to say, the most terrible apprehensions of a sinful but repentant spirit, which knew not how to regain the favour of God, or how to establish its lost peace-peace lost through vanished purity, forfeited blessings, and shipwrecked happiness. The fear of the dread punishment reserved for transgressions by a just and omnipotent God, who can consign both soul and body to hell, is dispelled by visions of celestial mercy. Such is the will of the Almighty Father who speaks to us through Christ, in these consoling words-" Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Let our souls then renew their courage, and seek to strengthen themselves by solemn meditation at the close of every succeeding day. This glorious conviction which is ours, will sustain us, though none of our days can run their appointed course, without bringing against us new accusations for opportunities lost, and for fresh offences committed against the Divine Majesty. If some of our misdeeds may be unintentional, all of our vanished hours may give evidence against us.

If we believe in an invisible and eternal world, we must sensibly feel that, wandering from God, we seek our own destruction and everlasting misery. Supine indolence can afford us no security. It will not save us from death, it cannot screen us from judgment. As well might we try to persuade ourselves, that by shutting our eyes we can escape the fury of a roaring lion, or turn aside from our bodies the deadly spear or the avenging sword. Can we indulge in such guilty weakness, and still imagine we act the part of rational beings? Serious reflection and timely penitence, can alone save us from perdition.

Be it ours to remember, when we appeal to God for his forgiveness, the sacred duties which devolve upon us from the very extension of his mercy. If that be the highest of all blessings which our Father in heaven can bestow upon his offending children—if it is the dearest, most affecting proof of his love, how can any of those who are the favoured objects of it, continue to pursue a sinful career? how can the transgressor still take pleasure in that which he must feel renders him unworthy such boundless compassion? How can he, to whom so much is graciously conceded, remain indifferent on those points which relate to his future salvation, and devote himself to the levities of a wicked world?

But too frequently it is seen, though conscience is awakened, pride is unwilling to own it, and a thirst for forbidden pleasures carries the thoughtless backslider into fresh misdeeds. Sooner or later the cares of the soul must transcend every other anxiety. Let us then, ere it is too late, turn from the path of vanity, look at ourselves as we really are, and devote all our best energies to the things which belong to another state of being. Oh! let us hasten to awake from the fatal dreams which have occupied our thoughts heretofore, and seek for comfort where it is to be found, in the promises of a crucified Saviour.

Shall we rashly delay to enter on a new and better life? Shall we weakly abandon all hope for ever? or shall we resolve only to become sincere Christians in the last days of our life? God in his mercy forbid! What can excuse the lukewarm manner in which many who profess religion carry on what ought to be their most important concern?

We are the creatures of the Deity. Formed by him, he has lodged immortal souls in our bodies, which are only intended to be the place of their temporary abode. We know not this night what may await us to-morrow, and-awful thought! how will these excuses which we are in the habit of making to ourselves, appear, when we stand at the bar of the eternal, to his all-seeing eye? No delay then shall henceforth be allowed. evening, to-morrow, and every future day to which we may awake, we will faithfully and zealously endeavour to perform our duty. One day lost, and it may be too late to solicit that pardon on which our happiness in the world to come de-God's great goodness, his forbearance, and long suffering, too long already neglected, ought to wake in us an earnest desire to give up our whole hearts forthwith, to the work of true repentance. We will lose no more time, but at length devote our lives to God, and to unceasing obedience to his sacred commandments. By good

works, we will seek, in some measure, to reconcile ourselves to the great parent we have rashly offended; and so prepare ourselves for the awful change which we know awaits us, and for the final ordeal—the day of judgment.

THE GOD OF THIS WORLD.

It would appear from the records of inspiration, that the contest, is not, yet, ended; that, on the one hand, the spirit of God, is employed, in making for the truths of Christianity, a way into the human heart, with all the power of an effectual demonstration: that, on the other, there is a spirit, now abroad, which worketh in the children of disobedience: that, on the one hand, the Holy Ghost, is calling men out of darkness, into the marvellous light of the Gospel: and that, on the other hand, he, who is styled the god of this world, is blinding their hearts, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, should enter into them; that they, who are under the dominion of the one, are said, to have overcome, because, greater is he, that is in them, than he, that is in the world; and that they, who are under the dominion of the other, are said, to be the children of the devil, and to be under his snare, and to be taken captives by him, at his will. How these, respective powers, do operate, is one question. The fact of their operation, is another. We abstain from the former: we attach ourselves to the latter, and gather from it, that the prince of darkness, still, walketh abroad amongst us; that he is, still, working his insidious policy, if not with the vigorous inspiration of hope, at least, with the frantic energies of despair; that, while the overtures of reconciliation, are made to circulate through the world, he is plying all his devices, to deafen, and to extinguish the impression of them; or, in other words, while a process of invitation, and of argument, has emanated from heaven, for reclaiming men to their loyaltythe process, is resisted, at all points, by one, who is putting forth his every expedient, and wielding a mysterious ascend-

ancy, to seduce, and to enthral them.

To an infidel ear, all this, carries the sound of something wild, and visionary along with it. But, though, only, known through the medium of revelation, after it is known, who can fail, to recognise its harmony, with the great lineaments of human experience? Who has not felt, the workings of a rivalry within him, between the power of conscience, and the power of temptation? Who does not remember those seasons of retirement, when the calculations of eternity, had gotten a momentary command over the heart; and time, with all its interests, and all its vexations, nad dwindled into insignificancy before them? And who does not remember, how, upon his actual engagement with the objects of time, they resumed a controul, as great, and as omnipotent, as if all the importance of eternity, adhered to them,-how they emitted from them, such an impression upon his feelings, as to fix and to fascinate the whole man, into a subserviency to their influence,-how, in spite of every lesson of their worthlessness, brought home to him, at every turn, by the rapidity of the seasons, and the vicissitudes of life, and the ever-moving progress of his own earthly career, -and the visible ravages of death, among his acquaintances around him, and the desolations of his family, and the constant breaking up of his system of friendships, and the affecting spectacle of all, that lives, and is in motion, withering, and hastening to the grave: -oh! how comes it, that, in the face of all this experience, the whole elevation of purpose, conceived in the hour of his better understanding, should be dissipated and forgotten? Whence the might, and whence the mystery of that spell, which so binds, and so infatuates us to the world? What

prompts us, so, to embark the whole strength of our eagerness, and of our desires, in pursuit of interests, which we know, a few little years, will bring to utter annihilation? Who is it that imparts to them all the charm, and all the colour of an unfailing durability? Who is it, that throws such an air of stability over these earthly tabernacles: as makes them look, to the fascinated eye of man, like resting-places for eternity? Who is it, that so pictures out the objects of sense, and so magnifies the range of their future enjoyment, and so dazzles the fond, and deceived imagination, that, in looking onward through our earthly career, it appears, like the vista, or, the perspective of innumerable ages?—He, who is called the god of this world.

\*\*Dr. Chalmers\*\*

# MORNING.—MARCH 17.

PEACE OF MIND.

No longer I follow a sound; No longer a dream I pursue: O happiness! not to be found, Unattainable treasure, adieu!

I have sought thee in splendour and dress, In the regions of pleasure and taste; I have sought thee, and seem'd to possess, But have proved thee a vision at last.

An humble ambition and hope
The voice of true wisdom inspires!
'Tis sufficient, if peace be the scope,
And the summit of all our desires.

Peace may be the lot of the mind
That seeks it in meekness and love;
But rapture and bliss are confined
To the glorified spirits above!

Cowper.

GOD, UNDER THE MOST DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, WILL CARE FOR THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM. DEUT., I.

1 These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab

10 The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude,

11 (The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

12 How can 1 myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

13 Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou

hast spoken is good for us to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is

with him.

17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but ye shall

hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which

ve should do.

19 ¶ And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.

20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. 21 Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said

unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

22 ¶ And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men

of you, one of a tribe.

24 And they turned and went up into the mountain, and

came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the LORD our God doth give us.

26 Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against

the commandment of the LORD your God:

- 27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the Lobo hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.
- 28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.

29 Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of

30 The LORD your God, which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt

before your eyes;

31 And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

# THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST THE SUN OF THE TRUE BELIEVER'S WORLD.

The scriptures not only offer valuable precepts to govern our conduct in our progress through life, but also glorious announcements to cheer the faint and weary. Christ orders his disciples to proclaim "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Joyful, indeed, was this important message, for in the kingdom of Jesus, freedom, peace, and bliss, are found, for evermore; freedom from the servitude of sin, and the slavish yoke of evil passions, peace, and undisturbed tranquillity in the heart and conscience, and that unutterable bliss which he proves, whose whole soul is filled with the love of God and men, associated with the hope of mercy from above, and the blessed prospect of eternal life. In the kingdom of Jesus,

vice has no power—Satan no dominion, perfect harmony, and true benevolence have there established their abode, for all its subjects are children of the Most High, and, therefore, united in brotherly love. There all are united; they have one faith, one hope, one object, and one God.

In the kingdom of Jesus, misery and discord are unknown. There is no disappointment, there is no suffering, for our Saviour, always ready to succour the weak, protects, with his mighty arm. the subjects of his kingdom. He protects them not only against the common ills of human life. but against incurring future penalties and judgment, by his holy word, his blessed spirit, and by his great work of expiation. By his promises, he imparts comfort to his flock, whenever, for wise purposes, it is the eternal decree that they shall experience sorrow. To leave them in this blessed state, in the kingdom of Christ, must be our pride, our joy, and our glory, and nothing ought we so ardently to desire, as to prove ourselves true and loyal subjects of our Redeemer. We will then not fail to recall, from day to day. to our serious recollection, the several duties which we owe to a master so precious, so loving, and so kind—the faithful shepherd of his flock. We will never forget to render to him that tribute of love and gratitude, which we vowed to pay when first we aspired to be numbered among his followers, and that perfect obedience to his wise laws. the observance of which alone can entitle us to his protection. The allegiance we owe to him must constantly be borne in mind. It should be manifested in all situations in which we may find ourselves, by endeavouring to tread in his footsteps, and by obeying, with reverent obedience, his commandments. We cannot be too anxious to keep our thoughts ever fixed on what we owe to him, the august and the sublime, "before whom all knees shall bend," and to whom the Eternal gives a name infinitely exalted above all other names.

Too often has our neglect been well calculated to outrage our benefactor. How strangely extravagant has our insensibility shown itself! While every heart ought to have been filled to overflowing with his presence, we have suffered ourselves to be carried away by trifles, occupied with vain unsubstantial pleasures, which being past, the mind cannot revert to without shame. A secret indisposition to engage in heavenly pursuits has come over us, and we have perversely turned from the right to prefer the wrong. Per-

plexed and weary, we have become indifferent to salvation. Let us awake from this fearfully misleading dream; let us break the spell by which we have been enthralled, and again become free agents, and the true servants of God.

Yes, we will endeavour to make a wise and careful use of those means for gaining eternal happiness, which an indulgent parent has placed within our reach, in the communion of saints. We will, assiduously and devoutly, lift our thoughts to heaven in prayer; attend to the preaching of the gospel, and carefully examine ourselves with an anxious desire to fortify our faith, before we partake of the holy supper of our Redeemer.

While engaged in these exercises, may it be ours to feel assured that we are acting in accordance with thy will and pleasure, O Lord. Let the word of truth pierce our souls, and rather cause us to know severe pains, than leave us to perish in our sins. Teach us whatever mysteries in religion, are, as yet unknown to us—teach us all that it may be expedient we should know.

How great is the happiness which we have by Christ—by him who offers a soothing balm to the troubled conscience, relieves us from our cares. cheers our hearts, and enlightens our understandings. Where Christ has found an entrance, where he is worshipped, those who go astray, find the path of salvation; and those who are fallen, rise again with renovated hope, and rank among the candidates for heaven. The debtor is released from his difficulties, and endowed with a rich inheritance—the weak grow strong, the pusillanimous bold, by his influence; while those who faint are graciously upheld, and sinners who were on the road to hell are re-united to the children of God. The doctrine of Christ is the sun of the sincere believer's life, developing, bringing forth, and maturing, whatever germs of goodness the Creator originally planted in our souls. We are children of light, praised be the name of our blessed Lord and Saviour, now and evermore. Faithfullyearnestly, then, do we promise, that we will ever adore him, our King and our Redeemer, till life Humbly, in all things, will we submit to his will, proclaim his glory, and praising his love, join with all the good to praise his wisdom and his mercy.

HUSBAND TIME, LOOKING TO THE COMING OF CHRIST.

Throw time away! Astonishing, ruinous, irreparable profuseness! Throw empires away, and be blameless—but O! be parsimonious of thy days, husband thy precious hours. They go connected, indissolubly connected, with heaven or hell. Improved, they are a sure pledge of everlasting glory; wasted, they are a sad preface to never-ending confusion and

What a profound silence has composed the world. So profound is the silence, that my very breath seems a noise, the ticking of my watch is distinctly heard! If I do but stir, it creates a disturbance. There is now none of that confused din from the tunultuous city; no voice of jovial rustics from the neighbouring meadow; no chirping melody from the shady thicket. Every lip is sealed. Not the least whisper invades the ear; not the least motion rustles among the boughs. Echo herself sleeps unmolested. The expanded ear, though all attention, catches no sound, but the liquid lapse of a distant murmuring stream.

#### All things are hushed, as Nature's self lay dead.

If, in the midst of this deep and universal composure, ten thousand bellowing thunders should burst over my head, and rend the skies with their united vollies, how should I bear so unexpected a shock? It would stun my senses, and confound my thoughts. I should shudder in every limb; perhaps, sink to the earth with terror. Consider then, O mortals! consider the much more prodigious and amazing call, which will, ere long, alarm your sleeping bones. When the tenants of the tomb have slumbered, in the most undisturbed repose, for a multitude of ages, what an inconceivable consternation must the shout of the archangel, and the trump of God, occasion ! Will it not wound the ear of the ungodly, and affright, even to distraction, the impenitent sinner? The stupendous peal will sound through the vast of heaven, will shake the foundations of nature, and pierce even the deepest recesses of the grave. And how-O! how will the prisoners of divine justice be able to endure that tremendous summons to a far more tremendous tribunal! Do thou, my soul, listen to the still voice of the gospel. Attend, in this thy day, to the gracious invitations of thy Saviour. Then shall that great midnight cry lose its horror, and be music in thy ears. It shall be welcome to thy reviving clay, as the tidings of liberty to the dungeon captive; as the year of jubilee to the harassed slave. This, this shall be its charming import, "Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust." Hervey.

#### EVENING .-- MARCH 17.

THE SOUL DESIRES UNEARTHLY BEST.

When all within is peace,
How Nature seems to smile!
Delights that never cease,
The live-long day beguile.
From mern to dewy eve,
With open hand she showers
Fresh blessings to deceive
And soothe the silent hours.

It is content of heart
Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart
Enlivens all it sees;
Can make a wintry sky
Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye
As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe, So beauteously array'd In Nature's various robe. With wondrous skill display'd,

Is to a mourner's heart A dreary wild at best; It flutters to depart,

And longs to be at rest. Cowper.

GOD BEHOLDS ALL THE DOINGS OF MEN. PS. CXXXIX.

1 O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off. 3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art

acquainted with all my ways.

4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord,

thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I

cannot attain unto it.

7 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I

flee from thy presence ? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make

my bed in hell, behold thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the

uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand

shall hold me. 11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike

13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered

me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. 17 How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!

how great is the sum of them!

18 If I should count them, they are more in number than

the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. 19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God; depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.

20 For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting,

THE FOLLY OF WASTING TIME ON WORLDLY CARES.

"Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart." Even thus, many of our contemporaries are wont to exclaim to each

other, and passing their hours in thoughtless revelry, they seem to care little for man or God. They manifest such hardness of heart, such careless indifference to all that it most behoves them to study, that to think of their mournful situation, cannot but fill the Christian with alarm and with horror.

On such offenders we are accustomed to look with lordly, condescending pity; but, doing so. are we quite sure, that when we remark on the beam in our neighbour's eye, we have not overlooked the mote which is in our own? When we carefully examine our bosoms, do we not find them filled with criminal carelessness, betraying us into blind security? We have ventured to slumber on the brink of a dangerous precipice. Acting thus, we have rebelled against the Majesty of Heaven. Weak, daring mortals as we are, we have not feared to break the laws of the King of kings, and thus justly subjected ourselves to a sentence of eternal condemnation. Well may we exclaim with the psalmist, "O Lord! our flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and we are afraid of thy judgments."

Can we deny that we stand in this predicament? Have we been always watchful, always conscientious and faithful? Have we been on the alert, to do all the good which God has given us strength and opportunity to perform? Have we laboured in the cause of virtue, cheerfully and assiduously, and have we been penetrated with the self-condemning and humble feeling which the publican in the gospel proved, when he smote his breast, and prayed in the emphatic words, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" Unhappily, we cannot be acquitted by our consciences, if we regard their verdict. If we confess the truth to ourselves, they must accuse us of having omitted to attempt much of the good which we might have done. We have wasted in idle dreams, precious time, which might have been wisely and beneficially employed. Many faults, for a long period, we have suffered to go on unchecked. Our very devotions have been stained with our depravity; our prayers have been breathed without zeal, while our hearts have been engaged with worldly objects. The works of charity for which we have claimed credit, have not always proceeded from that purity of mind which ought to mark the follower of Jesus; for we cannot forget that we have called for the world's applause, and with regard to the acts of others, we have judged too harshly of those whose conduct has offended us. We have been misled by the evil spirit of the times, to approve of what we ought to have rejected—to praise what we ought to censure—to long for what we ought to abhor. And still have we delayed to consecrate our hearts to God, grown callous to evil: we have regarded ourselves as justified, where reason could hardly suggest an excuse. Thus many a day has been spent, as if we had adopted as our own, as the proper studies of a Christian, the devices of the thoughtless votaries of the world.

Yet conscience tells—and will be heard—that we were born the rational creatures of God, and are consequently bound to obey all his laws. That rational nature which is given to man, and which enables him to understand what his Creator expects from his hands, tries to exert all his faculties to fulfil his duty. This we know: but in how many cases of great aggravation, have we acted as if we knew it not. "Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart," still rings in our ears. From day to day we delay the work which ought to occupy our every hour, and from which we ought to allow ourselves no respite; we neglect to strive for the prize of salvation, and squander away our lives, regardless of the solemn thought, that each passing moment may prove our last.

The portion of our life thus thrown away, can never be recalled. Oh! that we may always feel as keenly, and with the same deep regret as we do at this moment, how vast, how irreparable the loss; and that, pursuing such a course, we cannot be in the path which leads to eternal life. Each day of our sojourning on earth, ought to be devoted to the improvement of our minds, and to the purifying of our hearts. We act against ourselves, with a reckless enmity wholly unwarrantable, if we do not use our best exertions to extirpate every sinful thought that may find its way into our bosoms; if we do not endeavour to employ ourselves in good works, while yet it is day. Daily it must be our care to revive in our hearts this salutary feeling. Pious prayers addressed to the throne of mercy, and strict self-examination. shall confirm our purpose. We will not again suffer our minds to be lulled into false security by the insidious whisperings of self-love, that we are better than many others, since great faults, and abominable vices, are not imputed to us. No, we will not rest on such a deceitful foundation; we will not rest, till our consciences bear witness that we have expelled sin from our souls,

and that we are truly anxious to work, so far as we are capable, the will of the great Author of our being, in order that we may confidently claim as our own, that "pure love, which is the fulfilling of the law!" Oh God, our gracious Father! teach us thy ways, and in mercy grant, in addition to the power of forming good resolutions, the strength of mind and holy perseverance necessary to carry them into successful execution.

#### FLOWERS PREACH TO MAN.

Yonder tree, which faces the south, has something too remarkable to pass without observation.—Like the fruitful, though feeble vine, she brings forth a large family of branches; but, unable to support them herself, commits them to the tuition of a sunny wall. As yet, the tender twigs have scarce gemmed their future blossoms. However, I may anticipate the well-known productions, and picture to myself the passion-flower; which will, in due time, with a long and copious

succession adorn the boughs.

I have read, in a Latin author, of flowers inscribed with the names of kings: but here is one emblazoned with the marks of the bleeding Prince of Life. I read, in the inspired writings, of apostolic men, who bore about in their bodies, the dying of the Lord Jesus: but here is a blooming religioso, that carries apparent memorials of the same tremendous and fatal catastrophe.—Who would have expected to find such a tragedy of woe, exhibited in a collection of the most delicate delights? Or, to see Calvary's horrid scene, pourtrayed on the softest ornaments of the garden ?- Is nature then actuated by the noble ambition of paying commemorative honours to her agonizing Sovereign? Is she kindly officious to remind forgetful mortals of that miracle of mercy, which it is their duty to contemplate, and their happiness to believe?-Or, is a sportive imagination my interpreter, and all the supposed resemblance no more than the precarious gloss of fancy? Be it so: yet even fancy has her merit, when she sets forth, in such pleasing imagery, the crucified Jesus. Nor shall I refuse a willing regard to Imagination herself, when she employs her creative powers, to revive the sense of such unparalleled love, and prompt my gratitude to so divine a friend.

That spiral tendril, arising from the bottom of the stalk, is it a representation of the scourge which lashed the Redeemer's unspotted flesh, and inflicted those stripes, by which our souls are healed? Or is it twisted for the cord, which bound his hands in painful and ignominious confinement: those beneficent hands, which were incessantly stretched out to unloose the heavy burdens, and to impart blessings of every choice kind?-Behold the nails which were drenched in his sacred veins, and riveted his feet to the accursed tree: those beautiful feet, which always went about doing good; and travelled far and near to spread the glad tidings of everlasting salvation.-See the hammer, ponderous and massy, which drove the rugged irons through the shivering nerves; and forced a passage for those dreadful wedges, between the dislocated bones. View the thorns which encircled our royal Master's brow, and shot their keen afflictive points into his blessed head. O the smart! the racking smart! when instead of the triumphal laurel, or the odoriferous garland, that pungent and ragged wreath, was planted on the meek Messiah's forehead! When violent and barbarous blows of the strong eastern cane, struck the prickly crown, and fixed every thorn deep in his throbbing temples !- There stand the disciples, ranged in the green impalement, and forming a circle round the instruments of their great Commander's death. They appear like so many faithful adherents, who breathe a gallant resolution, either of defending their Lord to the last extremity, or of dropping honourably by his side. But did they give such proofs of zeal and fidelity in their conduct, as their steady posture, and determined aspect, seem to promise? Alas! what is all human firmness, when destitute of succours from above, but an expiring vapour? What is every saint, if unsupported by powerful grace, but an abandoned traitor?—Observe the glory delineated in double rays, grand with imperial purple, and rich with ethereal blue. But ah! how incapable are threads, though spun by summer's finest hand; though dyed in snows, or dipped in heaven, to display the immaculate excellency of his human, or the ineffable majesty of his divine nature!

#### MORNING.—MARCH 18.

#### JESUS OUR PILOT.

Yes! it is a truth most cheering, We shall reach the heavenly land! Jesus is our vessel steering; All must bow at his command.

Though by dangers we're surrounded,
Though our road be dark and drear,
We shall never be confounded,
For behold the Saviour's near.

He inspires us with his gladness,
He our grace and faith restores;
He dispels from us all sadness,
In our wounds rich oil he pours.

Then, since Jesus us is guiding, We'll unite to sing his praise; Ever in his word confiding, May we walk in all his ways.

Blessed be his love, amazing,
Vast, surpassing, free, and great;
Blessed be his name for raising
Sinners poor to bliss so great.

Christian's Magazine.

#### MAN'S RESURRECTION. 1 CORINTHIAS, CHAPTER XV.

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:
17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men mo-t miserable.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be

made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits:

afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when ye shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.

put down all rule, and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under

his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die.

33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up?

and with what body do they come?

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

#### HEAVEN AND ETERNITY.

"They which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." This we read in the word of God, and we are likewise called upon in many parts to receive that eternal inheritance. How vast is the offer. As feeble mortals, whose ideas are confined and limited by what we know of time, we are little capable of imagining what an everlasting existence must prove. Though we might combine the greatest numbers known to arithmetic, and heap millions on millions of years, still we can never form any adequate idea of eternity. But the incomprehensible and boundless extent of eternity, such as to our dim vision it presents itself, thrills the soul awake to religious impressions with a holy awe, while it offers a powerful motive for exerting our best energies to improve our lives, to become patient and persevering in our endeavours to accomplish good works, that the mighty prize of everlasting life may be ours.

If lost in amazement, oppressed by the magnitude of the subject, we are incapable of entertaining a lively and distinct image of the eternal happiness of the just, we may beneficially reflect on the evidence supplied by the holy scripture, and thus, by degrees, approach nearer and nearer to certainty. Though heaven may be to us an unexplored country, we are still permitted to consider it as the place which will be our future home; and to that, all our thoughts, all our actions, should tend. If we do this, what momentous considerations, affecting our earthly life, suggest themselves. How important every day, and each hour in every day, becomes, and how imperative the duty of mortals to remember, at all times, that our conversation is known, and that all our actions are registered above. This, if our destiny be duly borne in mind, is a privilege given to man, which is withheld from the meaner objects Since all we do is noted and remembered in heaven, it depends upon ourselves to lay up treasures there, which no felon hand can seize—which no fatal accident can mislay or destroy.

But are we prepared to encounter such observation? Can we lay claim to innocence? Perfect righteousness ought to be ours, but dare we affirm that it is? Though, perhaps, not so criminal as others, we are still condemned sinners. Can we do other than plead guilty to this charge? Let us appeal to our consciences, and solemnly enquire if we have never sinned against God. read in scripture, Solomon declared that in his days there was not "a just man upon earth who did good, and sinned not." Eccle. vii. 20. apostle Paul also, tells that "all had sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 9. Can we flatter ourselves that we are holier than those who lived in ancient times. Dare we flatter ourselves that the world grows better, and that we are in a state to face the Omniscient Majesty of heaven, to be judged according to our deeds? If we have avoided gross acts of immorality, which are punishable by human laws, have we never violated the rules of piety, temperance, and charity? To affirm this, would, alas! be not only reprehensible arrogance, but sinful falshood.

How slight and uncertain is the happiness of earth—how insignificant its noblest gifts—how insecure its best guarded possessions. We frequently acquire that which we deem important, only

to know the affliction of losing it again after a short period. We hold beloved objects for a time only that we may painfully feel their loss. Plunged into affliction by such accidents, we experience sharp trials, and prove unspeakable misery. By the light of the gospel alone, we are enabled to perceive for what purpose they were given, and in what consists their real value. That teaches us why they are so perishable, and so insufficient, why they were intended in numerous cases to be so easily forfeited. To understand this, we must regard ourselves as pupils of heaven, and heirs of everlasting bliss. Can we, in this character, rejoice in the acquisition of the perishable treasures of the world-can we fix our hearts on them, and cheerfully look forward to that moment which will render us for ever incapable of earthly enjoyment? No-wedded to these, the mind cannot raise itself up to the contemplation of heavenly things, and not hoping for happiness there, it seeks in vain for comfort here.

The solemn reflection that every day brings us nearer to the period of our departure, to helpless old age, ought not to fill us with apprehension and sadness, for it is only in death that we shall find rest and peace. But the reflection which it induces, ought to prepare us for the important transition, from time to eternity. Oh, let us teach our thoughts to apply themselves to this great subject. Oh, let it quicken our zeal to secure a life of bliss beyond the grave, by meekness, fortitude, and righteousness. As we progress from year to year, we feel that we are wandering among the dying and the dead; we feel that we, like them, are mortal, and can we continue to live in thoughtless security, as if in our case there were no cause for serious reflection.

Lord of all mercy, grant that our hearts may duly understand that this life is comparatively nothing, and eternity every thing. Be graciously pleased to strengthen thy servants in faith, that those matters which their bodily eyes can but imperfectly behold, may become clearly visible to the mental sight, and that they, scorning all the alluring vanities of the world, may give their best attention to joys which are to come. In mercy, grant that our hearts may be constantly found there, where our incorruptible treasure is stored, and let all our cares, and all our exertions this day, henceforth, and for ever, be directed to prepare us for that great good which thou hast proffered—our eternal inheritance in heaven.

#### SCRIPTURE THE GUIDE TO HEAVEN,

That there will be different degrees of future glory is a doctrine universally admitted. The deductions of reason, and the doctrines, precepts, and promises of revelation, alike lead to this conclusion. All, indeed, in heaven, will be happy, and very happy too; all shall behold their Saviour, and enjoy his benefactions and smiles; all shall shine in glory, all shall be possessed of vast mental capabilities, and all shall bask in the sunshine of eternal day; but all shall not do so alike. Gradation and variety, we are taught in scripture, characterize the heavenly as well as the present world. The larger the surface presented to the brightness of eternal glory, the greater must be the quantity of rays that are absorbed. The sun shines on all objects in nature, but all are not equally lovely and glorious.

"Though the same sun, with all-diffusive rays, Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze: We praise the stronger effort of his power, And always set the gem before the flower."

Now, it ought to be our constant concern and our highest ambition, not only to secure heaven, but also to secure the highest attainable degree of heavenly felicity and glory. And thus we come to the point at issue; and inquire, how shall we best attain this end? We reply, by seeking the greatest measure of holiness below; for the more grace we have here, the more glory shall we have hereafter. The truth of this statement is either directly or indirectly asserted or assumed throughout the whole of inspired writ, wichh of course ought to be our only directory in all our speculations on these subjects. The object proposed by the scriptures is to prepare us for the heavenly and eternal world—to tune the soul to a perfect harmony with that purity which is there alone realized and enjoyed to any perfection-a design as prominent as that a preface is introductory to a book, or any preparatory course of education is designed to qualify us for any particular business or profession in the present life; whence it follows, that the more closely we follow its directions, and imbibe its spirit, the better prepared must we be to enter upon that state, and the higher must we rise in rank amongst its members.

It is evident that piety and intellect, viewed in their connexions and bearings upon our future estate, must be proportionate to their relative contents and consequence, as discoverable in the inspired page; in other words, what they are now in principle, as developed in sacred writ, that are they in prospect, and that they will hereafter become in all the reality of existing life, condition, and character. The estimate of scripture on the subject is now but the mere record of revealed truth; it will then be its realized exhibition. What it now is in the sacred page, it will then be in the experience and future history of every individual spirit. What, then, saith the scripture? Let this decide our views on the subject, and let our minds and hearts, in the relative estimate we form, be moulded in strict conformity to the course and colouring of that current which runs with the greatest force and continuity along its inspired pages.

\*\*Dr. Edwards\*\*.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 18.

THE CHRISTIAN'S INVITATION TO HIS CREATOR.

Lord, what unvalued pleasures crown'd The days of old; When Thou wert so familiar found, Those days were gold. When Abraham wish'd thou couldst afford With him to feast; When Lot but said, "Turn in, my Lord,"

Thou wert his guest.

But, ah! this heart of mine doth pant, And beat for thee; Yet thou art strange, and will not grant Thyself to me.

What, shall thy people be so dear To thee no more? Or is not heaven to earth as near As heretofore?

The famish'd raven's hoarser cry
Finds out thine ear;
My soul is famish'd, and I die
Unless thou hear.

O thou great Alpha! King of kings! Or bow to me, Or lend my soul seraphic wings,

To get to thee.

Anon.

#### THE LORD'S SUPPER. LUKE XXII.

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might

kill him; for they feared the people.

3 ¶ Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.
4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief

priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

7 ¶ Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

22 And truly the Son of man goetn, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 ¶ And there was also strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he

that doth serve.

AID FROM ABOVE IS GRANTED TO THE WEAK.

"This do in remembrance of me," said the Lord, and took the bread and the wine, and instituted the holy supper. To the sincere and meditative Christian, how sweet, how interesting are the reminiscences of that solemn hour, in which he first approached the table of the Lord to make a vow of the purest love, of sincere enduring piety, and to join the elder followers of Jesus Christ. How important and critical were the days of our youth -when we were preparing for the communion of Jesus. Had not just awe of the majesty of God, the searcher of all hearts, with love of the Redeemer, and faith in an eternal and recompensing life, been in those days established in our souls, we might now be lost amidst the temptations of the world. Incapable of raising our thoughts in prayer, to a God of mercy, under the pressure of the most afflicting ills of life, we should have wanted the consoling reflection, that the Lord of all, directs and orders the fate of his creatures here below.

We have abundant reason to exult in the recollection of those days and years, when we were introduced to the knowledge of the holy word of the Lord, and of our own immortal destiny. But connected with this retrospect, some important questions will arise, which we ought, most seriously, to put to ourselves; for what sinners, what grievous offenders must we be, if, since that period, we have not advanced in the ways of piety, towards heaven. If we have allowed ourselves to suspend those sacred exercises to which our minds were turned, if our consciences should accuse us that our zeal for the glory of God had cooled down—(how awful the reflection) could we then belong to the redeemed Jesus? Could we in that case claim

to have been enlightened by him?

And if we have so forgotten our duty, and so neglected our interest, against whom has the sinful voice been raised? against whom has the rebellious hand been lifted? Whose friendship have we spurned, whose wrath have we presumed to trace? Is it that of a man like ourselves, or is it only that of a monarch, who can but kill the body?—no; we have dared to provoke the Eternal, the immortal Ruler of the universe, who can destroy both body and soul, by our sinful negligence.

What madness thus to provoke a God of infinite power! A fearful charge, but can we declare that

it has no foundation?

When we manifest a culpable indifference to that which so nearly concerns us, can we deserve that God should aid us by his holy spirit, to accomplish what is good? Certainly not; he can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Oh! then, we will this day place before our eyes his sacred commandments, and applyour hearts, with all diligence, to study and to remember them, for connected with these are the issues of life and death.

Amidst the tumultuous cares of the world, we have lost much; a great deal too much of that blessed faith which was ours in former years, and which we then embraced with holy eagerness. We feel that we have been, in many respects, deteriorated: we have become less grateful, less sensible of the goodness of God, less innocent, and less resigned to the divine will, than we were at that period when we first received the cup of thanksgiving. We have ceased to pray with the same fervour with which we once addressed our gracious Foolish pride and degrading selfishness have taken possession of hearts that once knew humility and generosity. While we take this sad retrospect, we have to lament that in other respects we have made no satisfactory progress in the path which the Christian should tread. We ought to have been able to exert ourselves in the cause of truth and religion, with greater earnestness, and increased strength. Would that we could return to the innocence and pure joy-to the content and gratitude—to the obedience and cheerfulness of the days of our youth. That we cannot hope to do so completely as we ought, but nevertheless, from this day forward, we will strive with greater resolution to correct our weaknesses. We will aim at a child-like submission to God. We will encourage humble thoughts, and put down a repining spirit. Thus cultivating virtuous inclinations, we trust our hearts will grow in piety-that the love which is the fulfilling of the law, will again be

known to us; and if thou, Oh God, grantest thy assistance—the influence of thy holy spirit—the light of thy word, with the example of thy Son, we confidently feel that our efforts will not fail. In the fulness of thy gracious love, thou wilt not allow the stumbling to fall, the weak to go astray, and thou wilt bestow thy forgiveness on the repentant. Our souls trust in thee; thou art the rock on which our hopes repose.

#### ACTIVE PIETY.

Mr. Wesley, the father of the celebrated Methodists, was incumbent of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. During her husband's absence, "as there was no afternoon service at Epworth, Mrs. Wesley prayed with her own family on Sunday evenings, read a sermon, and engaged afterwards in religious conversation. Some of the parishioners who came in accidentally were not excluded; and she did not think it proper that their presence should interrupt the duty of the hour. Induced by the report which these persons made, others requested permission to attend; and in this manner from thirty to forty persons usually assembled. After this had continued some time, she happened to find an account of the Danish missionaries in her husband's study, and was much impressed by the perusal. The book strengthened her desire of doing good; she chose 'the best and most awakening sermons,' and spake with more freedom, more warmth, and more affection to the neighbours who attended at her evening prayers; their numbers increased in consequence, for she did not think it right to deny any who asked admittance. More persons came, at length, than the apartment would hold; and the thing was represented to her husband in such a manner, that he wrote to her, objecting to her conduct, because, he said, 'it looked particular,' because of her sex, and because he was at that time in a public character, which rendered it the more necessary that she should do nothing to attract censure; and he recommended that some person should read for her. She began her reply by heartily thanking him for dealing so plainly and faithfully with her in a matter of no common concern. 'As to its looking particular' said she, 'I grant that it does; and so does almost everything that is serious, or that may any way advance the glory of God, or the salvation of souls, if it be performed out of a pulpit, or in the way of common conversation; because, in our corrupt age, the utmost care and diligence have been used to banish all discourse of God, or spiritual concerns out of society, as if religion were never to appear out of the closet, and we were to be ashamed of nothing so much as of confessing ourselves to be Christians.' To the objection on account of her sex, she answered, that as she was a woman, so she was also mistress of a large family; and though the superior charge lay upon him as their head and minister, yet in his absence she could not but look upon every soul which he had left under her care, as a talent committed to her under a trust, by the great Lord of all the families of heaven and earth. 'If,' she added, 'I am unfaithful to Him or to you, in neglecting to improve these talents, how shall I answer unto him, when he shall command me to render an account of my stewardship?' The objections which arose from his own station and character, she left entirely to his own judgment. 'Why any person should reflect upon him, because his wife endeavoured to draw people to church, and restrain them, by reading and other persuasions, from profaning the Sabbath, she could not conceive; and if any were mad enough to do so, she hoped he would not regard it.'

Christian Magazine.

## MORNING.—MARCH 19.

#### THE LORD OUR JUDGE.

The Lord, the Judge, before his throne, Bids the whole earth draw nigh, The nations near the rising sun, And near the western sky.

No more shall bold blasphemers say, "Judgment will ne'er begin;" No more abuse his long delay To impudence and sin.

Thron'd on a cloud our God shall come, Bright flames prepare his way; Thunder and darkness, fire and storm, Lead on the dreadful day.

"But gather all my saints," he cries,
"That made their peace with God,
By the Redeemer's sacrifice,
And sealed it with his blood."

Watts.

GOD DENOUNCES THE WICKED; BUT THE RIGHTEOUS,
AND THE REPENTANT, SHALL NOT PERISH.

EZEKIEL, XVIII.

2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

3 As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion

any more to use this proverb in Israel.

4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

5 ¶ But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and

7 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

8 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

9 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.

10  $\P$  If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,

11 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

12 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,

13 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

14 ¶ Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like



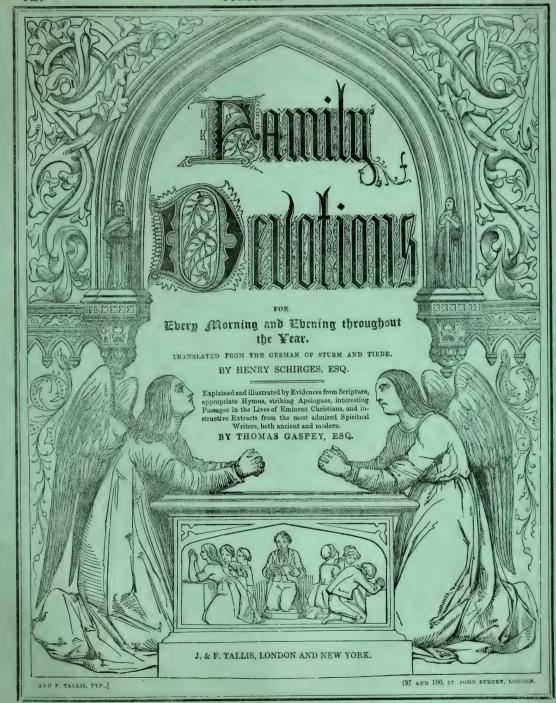
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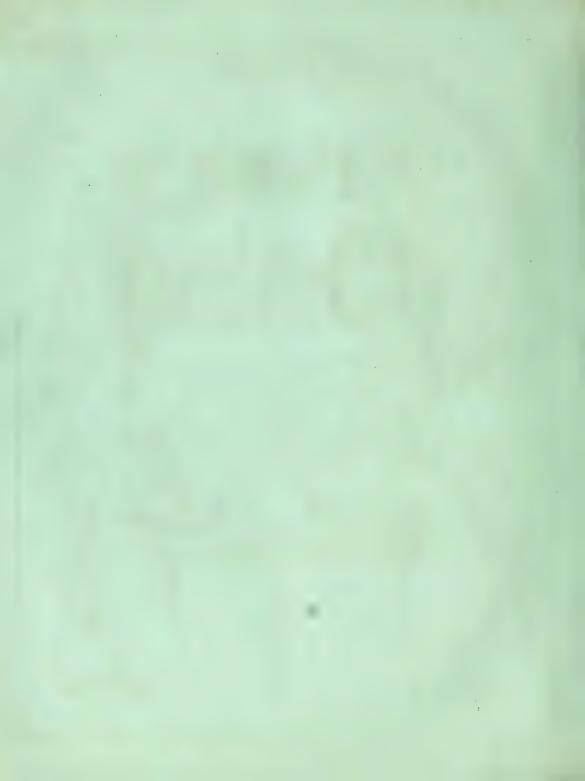
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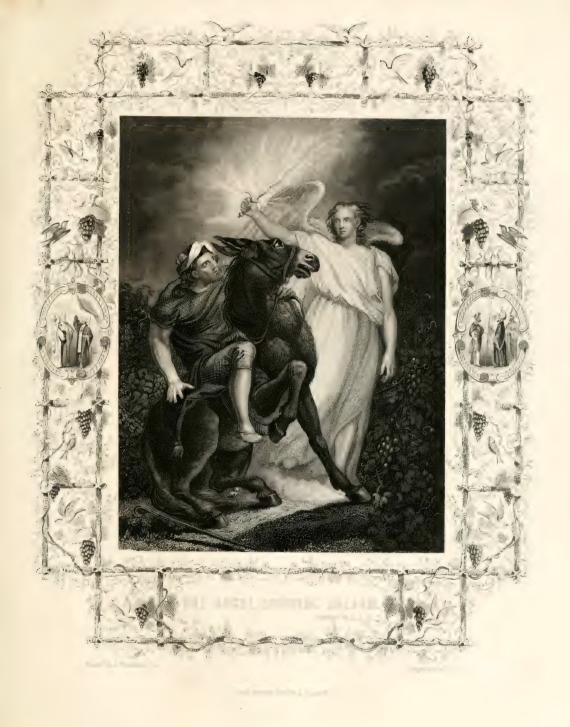
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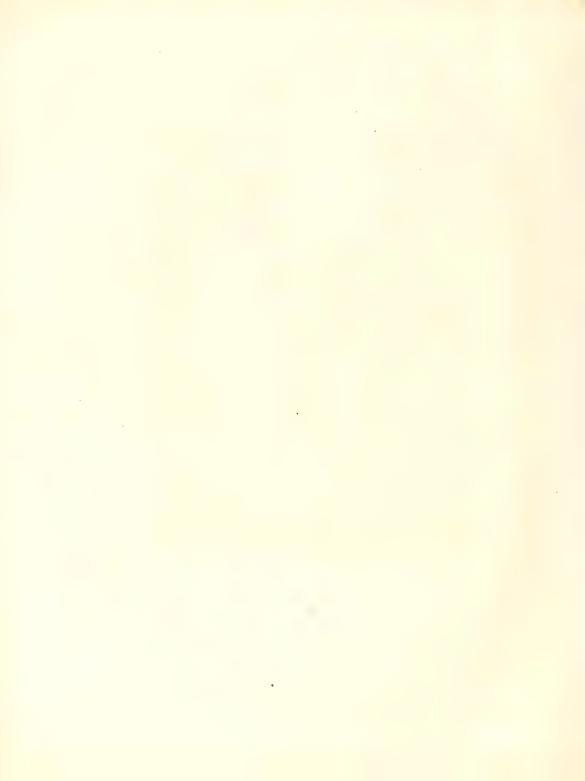












15 That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not

defiled his neighbour's wife,

16 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

17 That hath taken off his nand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity

of his father, he shall surely live.

18 As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among

his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity.

19 ¶ Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be

apon him.

21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions that he he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

# GOD IS EVERYWHERE, TO COMFORT THE GOOD, AND TO TERRIFY THE WICKED.

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." On these words we cannot too frequently reflect. When it has unhappily come to pass, that we, in our journey through this world, coveting its alluring pleasures, have fallen into vice, have we not trembled in our hearts, at the thought that God is omnipresent, and that darkness is as light to his all-seeing eye? Have we not shuddered, when, amidst the gaieties of sinful pleasure, this recollection has occurred, as an awful warning to the offending spirit? We have seen the errors of our ways, and thrilled with agony and alarm, We are often not have become penitent. only exposed to self-reproach, for that which shews itself externally, but we know that our souls are, in many cases, secretly agitated by impure thoughts, unholy desires, and a disposition to give way to the tempter. Would to God it were in our power to banish such thoughts from our souls for ever! Oh! that we might cease to know the inclination to do evil, and be able, once for all, to subdue the seductive images of a wicked imagination !- by which we forfeit the grace of God, and everlasting peace, forego our claims to salvation, and heap on ourselves mournful degradation, to be followed by bitter regret

We cannot plead that we have erred unwittingly. Born in a Christian land, God's law has been placed before our eyes; we have known how to do good; but have preferred taking the opposite course. In our infancy, we were taught the will of God, and over and over again, it has been repeated to us, from our youth upwards. We have received timely warning of the dismal consequence of disobedience to the Almighty; yet still we have offended, and we have found pleasure in the company of those who were ready to neglect his laws.

Since such is our condition,—since our transgressions are undeniably great, what must the wretched offenders do? Let us call to our assistance the reflection, that the Lord is every where near us, that we may succeed in bending our minds to that which is sacred, and lose no opportunity for purifying our hearts. That shall warn us to fly from danger, whenever we need admonition; it will rouse and elevate our hearts to attempt nobler flights of virtue, and resolutely incline us to prefer the path of duty, where temptation would betray us into vicious courses. Thus shall it prove the means of protecting us against the most fearful dangers that can beset us in this world of sorrow,—those which grow out of the depraved propensities of our own nature.

Nor is this all. The thought shall be fruitful of comfort, when we find ourselves forsaken by man, or in circumstances where all human aid can be of no avail. Then shall we feel disposed to exclaim with the Saviour, "You all will forsake me, but yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me." Yes, the consciousness of the omnipresence of God, is a solace to those who lead a pious life, and walk in fear of their Creator,—a solace calculated, in any case, to dissipate alarm. When we find ourselves cruelly slandered, and harshly judged, what a blessed reflection does the Christian prove, if he confidently feels that he may exclaim with Job, "my witness is in heaven." Surrounded by calamity—embarrassed how to act-abandoned by those who were dear to us, and looking in vain to our fellow men for assistance, how cheering then is the thought, that we possess, in the Lord, a firm friend, whose care will never fail us. Does misfortune assail us on all points? what consolation is like that suggested by the thought that the potent Father of the universe is near to his worshippers—he who rules

all the good and evil of this life, and who manages all for the best; who provides for us, as a bounti-

ful parent for his children.

Oh! it is sweet to know, when we pray to our God in secret, that our humble supplications will not be unregarded. That he who watched over our infant days, who gave us the faculties we possess, and who has every day supplied our needful wants with a lavish hand, has heard our cry when trouble came over us, and appeared for our deliverance when we called upon him for help. He understands our most secret sighs, and we rejoice to know, that when, in the spirit of true benevolence, and when for conscience's sake, we privately endeavour to succour the poor, the needy, and the helpless, our labours are not lost and forgotten, for He remembers all our benefactions. When we receive unlooked-for kindness, not knowing the sympathising Brother who communicates our pains, or feeling ourselves incapable of repaying the benefits we have received, how cheering and grateful is the reflection, that the Lord knows him, will reward his love, and, one day, give us to know our earthly friend.

To him all our wants are exposed, and, as in the case of his disciples, it has been his care that we should not want. All our possessions came from him. What have we, which his goodness did not originally bestow, and subsequently preserve?—and not among the least valuable proofs of his being near to us, are the tender exhortations which he has caused to be addressed to us, to recal us from our wickedness, and to guide us

into the way which leads to life.

Grant to us, O God! the grace to join ourselves to those pious brethren who are rejoiced and sustained by the conviction, that thou art ever present, and who are never disturbed by the thought that their gracious Protector is far away. May a holy dread of encountering thy reproving glance still be present to our souls, whenever the enticements of sin shall be likely to prevail over our weakness. Thy omnipresence shall be our hope, and our stay, in all the trials we may know. If thou art with us, who will be against us? If thou art on our right hand, thy servants shall remain in peace whilst journeying through this world, and leave it with the firm persuasion, that it will be theirs to enter on a course of immortal jov.

THE GOSPEL.

What is the gospel?—what does it provide for man? We answer with our Lord—Life. Life temporal, life eternal. It

has the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Man, in his state of nature, is doomed to death; and he finds here a reprieve. Man lies on the border of destruc-tion; there is but a step between him and eternal death; and lo! pardon is here offered to him-a way of escape and deliverance, the forgiveness of his sins, and the acceptance of his person in Christ. The gospel offers to man a promise or this life; the protection of Providence; the supply of his temporal wants; food to eat; raiment to put on; peace, hope, solace: a quiet conscience; a mind filled with love to all: union with the body of Christ's church; unnumbered mercies and blessings, which he merits not to receive. But the great distinguishing promise of the gospel is eternal life. "I will give unto them," says Christ, "eternal life, and they shall never perish." Life, that is, in the very midst of death; life secured in a decaying and mouldering tabernacle; life unceasing, continuous, eternal-life surviving the grave, and invincible to the power of death-life at the right hand of God, the fountain and source of life to all. This life is in Christ. Man is expressly invited to come to him, that he may have life. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." For there is nothing, brethren, independently of Christ, throughout the region of space, that can give life to man. Death is stamped on all.

space, that can give line to man. Death is stamped on all. Death may be communicated to all we see, and touch, and handle; life by nothing. But Christ bestows life.

It originates in him. "In him is life." He is "the resurrection and the life." He is "the bread of life." He "giveth life to the world." He is the one source and origin of the waters of life; the fountain whence they flow, the spring whence they emanate. Out of Christ, all is death, ruin, decay. When he comes by his Spirit and grace into the heart, the dead bones revive; the wilderness becomes the garden of the Lord; an awakening takes place; light breaks in; all

is new.

Again: Christ has purchased life for man. It is the result of his sacrifice and death. "I am come," he cries, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." All the power of men and angels could never have rolled back the curse hanging over fallen man, or subdued the kingdom of Satan; but the suffering and rising Saviour effects the mighty work. He conquers death. He atones for sin. He satisfies the divine justice. He vanquishes hell and the grave; and the prisoners of death are free. A bright gleam of hope from the throne of God beams upon them. "He that believeth on me," cries the triumphant Redeemer, "though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." Eternal death has no power. Even the death of the body is rendered harmless; it becomes a chained foe. It is but a sleep of rest, until the resurrection morn.

Once more; it is Christ who offers life to man; who proposes it for his acceptance; who calls back wandering sinners from the path of sin and ruin. "Turn ye, turn ye," is his language, "why will ye die?" Tender love and affection actuate his breast. What the Saviour's feelings were when walking this earth, and beholding a world sunk in ruin, lying in wickedness, hurrying to destruction, we may gather from his touching and affecting appeals—"Come unto me," all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not." "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." All his instructions tended to this point, the communication of life. He offers it freely, without money and without price. We have only to come to Christ to obtain it. To draw nigh, that is, in faith to approach in the

spirit of the sick man, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." This is the cry of faith. It shall assuredly be answered, "I will, be thou clean." Such, my brethren, is the gospel-offer of salvation. It proposes to you life. It offers to you salvation. It brings you the news of pardon, of grace, of acceptance in Jesus Christ.

Bishop of Calcutta.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 19.

THE MOURNER WILL BE COMFORTED.

Christians hail the blissful sight, Brethren to our arms returning; Sorrow may endure the night, But joy cometh in the morning!

Faith hath triumphed in the fight, Prayer hath not been poured in vain; Christians let us here unite, Hand and heart and voice again.

Seize the moments bright and fleeting, Seize the joy too quickly gone; Scarce we taste the bliss of meeting, Ere the parting pang draws on.

Soon will ocean's waves divide us-Many a plain and many a hill; But the soul whate'er betide us, Meets its kindred spirit still :-

Meets in mutual praise and prayer, Friendship's chain to clasp anew: Christians, stay the bitter tear, Parting hath no pang for you!

And when life's brief course is done, With the glorious church above; Body, spirit all in one, We shall taste the heaven of love.

Gladly then to God we yield ye Safe beneath his wings to dwell: He shall comfort, guide, and shield ye Christian, brethren, fare ye well!

Hawkinson.

GOD IS STRONG TO PROTECT. ACTS XXIII.

12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And there were more than forty which had made this

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in

wait, he went and entered into the eastle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain,

and said, Paul the prisoner called me un o him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou

hast to tell me?

20 And he said. The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly

21 But do not thou yield unto them; for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these

things to me.

23 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen three score and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

24 And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on,

and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.

25 And he wrote a letter after this manner:

26 Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting

27 This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood he was a Roman.

28 And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council.

29 Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

30 And when it was told me how the Jews had laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.

GOD'S JUSTICE NOT TO BE IMPUGNED, BECAUSE THE WICKED FLOURISH FOR A SEASON.

The feeble-minded, the weak in faith, are often depressed when they see vice triumph. They forget that it is but for a season. "The Lord has made bare his holy arm," we are told in scripture; and this exclamation we are often tempted to adopt, when we go over the history of the human race, and mark the signal chastisements which, from time to time, have fallen on the wicked; and in these we can distinctly perceive the trace of a holy government of the world. How many deeds of sin and darkness which men, labouring under a sad delusion, and perversion of their hearts, have been suppressed by the great and good Lord of all in their first origin, by the most wonderful dispositions of infinite wisdom; by changes which he caused suddenly to take place, by the terror which his omnipotent arm spread among the sinners, how frequently do we see that the schemes of wickedness, of audacious wantonness, of folly and injustice, are wholly frustrated, in the very moment when it was expected they were to be successfully carried into execution; and this too, by some simple incident or curious train of circumstances, which no human ingenuity was able to prepare or anticipate. The Deity in his mercy, is seen to arrest the evil when it was about to burst forth on markind. Insuperable obstacles are thrown in its road, and salutary results are ordered to spring from the labour of those who had no wish but to work evil.

Have we not, in some degree, felt this principle working in ourselves? Have not our hearts been compelled to remonstrate against that which our tongues were disposed to excuse? Has not conscience opposed what our misled reason was inclined to favour, and solemnly warned us of the consequences which must ensue. These warnings were, in truth, the work of God conveyed in the critical moment to the faltering sinner's ear, to drive him from his evil ways, by placing before his mental sight, the horrors of everlasting death.

"But the Lord made bare his holy arm," in no instance more strikingly than in the history of his chosen people, who, for centuries, enjoyed the greatest blessings his bounty could bestow, and who alone knew his will, and were duly instructed how to worship him. How awfully, when the day of his wrath came, was that nation hurled from the eminence on which it had for a long time stood, after the Jews had broken their covenant with God! How dreadfully were they punished for having put to death the prophets who were sent to them, and for having crucified as a malefactor, the very Messiah and deliverer, born to them at Bethlehem, and ordained to offer them the boon The Jews are exterminated as a of salvation. nation, and scattered over the face of the earthand no living man knows the spot where the sanctuary was once placed, and where they assembled to worship the great Jehovah, the God of their fathers. Their fate is well calculated to teach all people on earth, an awful lesson. not deceived—God is not mocked, and neglected with impunity.

Deeply, deeply impress on our weak and easily deceived hearts, this solemn admonition. Too frequently we have forgotten that we are under the government of the holy and just one—too frequently been lulled into security, because hitherto our sins have not been punished. We

have sinned, and repented our sinnings. If the sight of those who lead an ungodly life, who are unjust in their dealings, and who seem to escape with impunity, tends to strengthen and confirm us in our weaknesses—oh, let us be wise in time, and learn to mark their end. Behold them as they are—mark their wretchedness when the time of their tribulation is come—their trembling fear of the future; their abject terror in the hour of danger, and their awful dread of death, when the terrible arm of God, outstretched to chastise the scorner, cannot but be recognised. Can we look at this, and not seek to reform our lives?

Have we not sometimes perceived within ourselves an impulse, urging on our thoughts the importance of true religion? Why have such happy moments not been improved? Why were not all the powers of the soul put upon the stretch to catch and retain the heaven-born inspiration? What monstrous folly and neglect was it not to do so! Can we think ourselves rational, and yet thus idly trifle with matters of such stupendous importance?

Of this, no more. We must awake to a sense of duty; and though late, at length attend to our real interests. We will reform without further hesitation or delay, lest against us the Lord should make bare his holy arm. But no; this is not the feeling which we ought to experience. It is the love which the Father of all shews to us—that love which created us in his own image, and gave us his Son, that ought to move us to amend our lives, and exist but to virtue. May this, henceforth, influence all our actions, and a lively sense of it be imparted from above, by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THE ENJOYMENTS OF LIFE ARE UNCERTAIN; THE AFFLICTIONS NOT OF LONG DURATION.

When thy circumstances are easy, take care of flattering hopes, and creature dependencies: fear lest thou fall into security, and think it good to be here. True happiness is distant and future. It lies not on this, but the other side of death. We must die before we can be happy. "Cræsus once sent for Solon. At the first interview, he presented himself to the Philosopher in all his pomp and royal state. He commanded that he should be shewn his immense treasures, and then asked him, whom he thought to be the happy man. Solon named some excellent persons that were dead. The king missing the compliment to himself, asked directly what he thought of him, possessed of so much dignity and power. He replied, that observing the varieties of human life, and the numerous misfortunes, which attended every condition, he could not admire any man's happiness that may change, and therefore could not pronounce him happy, before he was dead." We have still more reason to say so, to whom We I life and immortality are brought to light. We may have many comforts to rejoice in; many pleasing prospects and hopes to revive us: but those are not Christ and heaven. I will wait therefore in faith and patience, till my change comes -till death open to me a passage to an happiness that will

be perfect and unchangeable.

This doctrine should support the afflicted righteous, and embolden them in the last conflicts of nature. Whatever our disappointments and sufferings are, we have considerations proper to alleviate our pain, and stifle all undue resentments. "This condition of being, appointed to me, is not the effect of my own choice, but of his who has a right to dispose of me, and fix the bounds of my habitation with a wider or nar-rower limit: and should I desert my station or my duty? No; let me act worthy my rational nature; thy Christian possession and hopes. By wisdom, by patience and submission; by an inviolable integrity let me shew myself superior to all difficulties. Shew that I am not disappointed by those disagrecable incidents; that I think my existence here, but a short part of my duration; and am looking and waiting for the blessed hope. I will still persevere, by the grace of God, in well doing, in this confidence, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God." When this is the case, we should not call that intolerable which cannot be long; nor sink under a burden that will shortly be taken off our shoulders.

Dr. Milner.

## MORNING.—MARCH 20.

THE REIGN OF THE REDEEMER.

Salvation is for ever nigh. The souls that fear and trust the Lord; And grace descending from on high, Fresh hopes of glory shall afford.

Mercy and truth on earth are met, Since Christ the Lord came down from Heaven! By his obedience so complete Justice is pleased, and peace is given.

Now truth and honour snall abound, Religion dwell on earth again, And heavenly influence bless the ground In our Redeemer's gentle reign.

His righteousness is gone before, To give us free access to God: Our wandering feet shall stray no more, But mark his steps, and keep the road.

Watts.

COMFORT FOR THE POOR-COUNSEL FOR THE RICH. I. TIMOTHY, VI.

6 Godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and

pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius

Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works,

ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal

### THE BLESSED EFFECTS OF PRAYER, AND DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

"I cried unto the Lord with my voice." To cry to our God for aid, in the day of trouble, is natural to man. This raising of the soul to him, this appealing to the Author of our being, is a most important exercise of the mind. It is a sublime effort of the spirit, which at once gives dignity and comfort to the petitioner, while pouring out his thoughts in supplication, or in thankfulness, and blessings follow in its train. Much. much are they to be pitied, who are strangers to its healing influence, and who cannot, who know not how to pray. To them the most lively and blissful feelings are unknown. Their desponding hearts are denied the sweetest consolations that can be experienced on earth. From day to day, their strength and courage, their capacity and desire to attempt virtuous actions, are diminished. Dost thou, penitent sinner, wish to feel how noble is thy origin, how splendid thy destiny, and how rich thou art, even in thy poverty, as regards earthly goods-how great in thy lowliness, and how potent in thy weakness? Raise thy voice to the Lord, and bid all that is merely of this earth, vanish from thy sight, or at least forbid it to occupy thy mind, and turn the course of thy thoughts to heavenly things. If thou art heavy and desponding, prayer will chase thy sadness. and the worship of the invisible Deity, giving new firmness, will enable thee to see all things through a brighter medium. Art thou depressed by the soul-enthralling cares of life? Prayer alleviates the burden. If thou feelest uneasy and alarmed, at the present aspect of thy affairs, prayer will

open to thy mind's eye the bright empire of hope, and of rational confidence. Satisfied of thy want of strength to preserve thyself virtuous, just, and holy, prayer will arm thy will with wonderful power. Oh! be careful, when thus engaged, that thy prayer shall not be a mere work of the tongue—a mindless playing with words. To be effectual, thy prayer must be real, fervent, and sincere.

Alas! how difficult is it, in numerous cases, for man thus to appeal to his Creator, unless chastening sorrow drives him to his God for mercy! Have we not felt our hearts alienated from him, while we were at ease?—but how speedily do we turn to him for succour, in any season of danger and difficulty! At such moments we scruple not to breathe solemn vows of amendment, in connexion with our beseechings for aid. We are then sufficiently ready to promise, that if God will but listen to our cry, and snatch us from the abyss of woe in which we find ourselves plunged, all our sins shall be repented and forsaken for ever. Thus have we appealed to the Eternal, and he has granted the assistance we implored; his mercy has spared us, that we might pursue a new and a better career; and yet, though by delivering us from sorrow, he had in a manner bound us down to the solemn observance of the engagements into which we had entered, have we not been weak and vicious enough to forget the obligation, and, as before, to neglect the salvation of our souls?

It ought to be our ceaseless anxiety, to live in communion with the Supreme Governor of the This can only be effected by our regarding him with awful veneration, by confidence in his goodness, and by resignation to his will. We must learn to feel our own littleness, as compared with the greatness of the Almighty, and to humble ourselves in his awful presence, that we may be raised by his mercy. To him let us ever make our anxious appeal. Self-convicted of the most aggravated offences-of having outrageously violated his laws, and abused his bounty, we penitentially acknowledge our depravity. Let us now pray in the right spirit; let all our feelings, our hopes, and our desires, proceed in one direction, and guide us in the path marked out for the follower of the Saviour to tread. Let us pursue it with our best energies. If we do this, and apply to God with eager solicitation, that our sorrowing spirits may be emancipated from carthly cares, we shall not pray in vain. We

are not to ask of the Deity, to be endowed with worldly riches, to be spared the toil and sorrow which is the ordinary lot of mortality; but that we may be liberated from the grovelling anxieties we have hitherto known, in connexion with such matters, which have rendered us indifferent to spiritual exercises, and turned our thoughts from seeking treasures above the sky. Have no care for worldly enjoyments, but cheerfully commit thyself to him, who governs the universe with wisdom; prepared, in all cases, to submit to his holy will. If we approach him with prayers of thanksgiving, it should not be for sensual gratifications and idle pleasures, but for that mental gratification, and that elevation of thought, which aspiring to bliss, in a happier state of being, gives the truly devout, peace of mind here. Let us learn to be grateful, even for those sufferings and labours we may know, severely as they have been felt, which have produced heavenly fruit, by turning our thoughts to Jesus. For such comfort our acknowledgments should be frequent and most hearty. It is thus that we ought to pray, and such is the thankfulness we ought to render to the Giver of all good. Then will the soul acquire new strength, and divine tranquillity will be ours. The weak, vain wishes of the unconverted man will be dismissed, useless cares no longer known. our hopes, our wishes will be enlarged and purified: growing confidence in God must give us strength not possessed before, and we shall feel inspired with new devotion. Thenceforward, feeling ourselves capable of bearing whatever visitation may overtake us, we shall serenely pursue our course, satisfied that, in the end, all will be well; that glory and felicity are reserved for us in heaven, where, face to face, we shall behold the Lord our God. Be this, while we remain in the world, our constant thought; Oh! cry unto the Lord with thy voice.

# RELIGIOUS EXERCISES ASSIDUOUSLY TAUGHT BY THE

I shall consider the duty which the psalmist is found in the performance of: and that is, praising God; "Blessed be the Lord," says he. This is a work which we often find him practising, from the consideration of those benefits he had received from God in general, or of any particular favours conferred upon him. What a grateful sense of the divine goodness doth he express in the 103rd psalm! In the first and second verses he says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." And he concludes the psalm with this,—"Bless the Lord, O my soul."

And what just occasion he had thus to enlarge on the

praises of his God, will appear, if we consider the difficulties he met withal, and his happy deliverance from them.

After he was seated on the throne, he was exposed to great hazards and dangers by reason of his bloody enemies; who were made so by the false and pernicious principles they had imbibed, which put them upon disturbing a quiet and peaceable government, and upon forming designs which (had not the arm of the Almighty interposed, to prevent the execution of them) would have issued in the utter subversion of the best-regulated constitution. In his distresses he made application to God, who he knew was able to help him, and of whose willingness to grant him succour in a time of calamity he had frequent experience. And as his first work in affliction was to cry to God, so his first work when he had obtained deliverance, was to offer the sacrifices of praise. When he had made his addresses to the throne of grace, and his God had sent him an answer of peace, he failed not to pay the tribute of praise to him for his condescension and goodness, that he had inclined his ear to him, and heard his cry. He says, Ps. lxvi. 20, "Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Nor is he only careful himself to glorify God, by offering praise to him; but he is frequently exciting others to engage in the same work: "O that men would praise the Lord," says he, "for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Ps. cvii. 8 .- which words you have

no less than four times in that psalm.

Harrison.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 20.

CHRIST'S LOVE AND HUMILITY.

The Son of glory gleamed the ray, Refined the darkness into day, And bid the vapours fly: Impelled by his eternal love, He left his palaces above, To cheer our gloomy sky.

How shall we celebrate the day, When God appeared in mortal clay, The mark of worldly scorn: When the Archangel's heavenly lays Attempted the Redeemer's praise, And hail'd salvation's morn?

An humble form the Godhead wore. The pains of poverty he bore, To gaudy pomp unknown: Though in a human walk he trod. Still was the Man Almighty God, In glory all his own.

Despised, oppressed, the Godhead bear. The torment of this vale of tears; Nor bade his vengeance rise; He saw the creatures he had made Revile his power, his peace invade; He saw with mercy's eyes.

How shall we celebrate his name, Who groaned beneath a life of shame, In all afflictions tried? The soul is raptured to conceive A truth which Being must believe .--The God eternal died.

Chatterton.

COME BOLDLY TO THE THRONE OF GRACE. HEB. IV.

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being

mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. 6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 (Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day, if ye will hear

his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.)

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any

man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of

him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points

tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need

LET THE SINNER INVITE MERCY BY AMENDING HIS LIFE, AND SEEKING CHRIST.

"But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment. even so I do. Arise, let us go hence." It was thus that Jesus spoke to his disciples, as the hour drew near, when God should glorify his Son, in order that he might also glorify his Father; that hour in which the great decree of the Lord, for the redemption of mankind, was to be carried into effect. When we read his deeply-interesting and affecting history, we see in him that anxiety, mortal anxiety, came over him; but though he felt pain and sorrow as a man, he did not despair; he was no stranger to the terrors of death; but he did not shrink, with pusillanimous dismay, from meeting them: if, for a moment, he sighed in deep dejection, he immediately resumed his courage to act his part with fortitude and resignation. He furnished to us and to all who shall live, a sublime example, which it should be our ambition to imitate.

But have we always kept this example before our eyes, when we have seen the hour of care and suffering approach? Does not our conscience tell that we have been criminal? To deny our guilt, would be but to increase it, and to provoke the wrath of our Maker in a greater degree. Attempting to justify ourselves, our own mouths would condemn us. Many iniquities have been ours. They have been more numerous than the hairs on our heads; and our hearts might well fail us, under the terrible accusation, but for the assurance we have of mercy from above, through the intercession of a gracious Redeemer.

When distress has encompassed us, have we, with unaffected sincerity, been able to pray as Jesus did,—" Not my will, but thy will be done." Oh! that our consciences would bear witness for us, that this were so; that they could testify to our resignation, to our cheerfulness, to our patient endurance of anguish, and to our unbending firmness! Unhappily, our hearts tell, that frequently the mere apprehension of calamity has disturbed our souls to that extent, that we have regarded the approach of night with dread, incapable of sleep or rest. We have been fearful and disconsolate; manifesting no confidence in the goodness of our Creator, and we have not borne the trials ordained by God for the purification of our spirits, with that courage, and submission to the divine will, that would become a Christian; but we have shrunk from them with repugnance, or complained of them as unjust.

In the days which are coming, may repetition of these sinful weaknesses be successfully avoided. Henceforth, the grateful recollection of the sufferings which a glorious Mediator endured, to liberate and save unhappy mortals, shall be constantly in our thoughts.

In the calmness of retirement, in the silence of night, we will apply ourselves strictly to examine our actions, our words, and our thoughts. If the Lord should have decided to try and prove us by suffering, in order to wean us from the lusts and the temptations of the world, shall we resist the will of our all-wise Father in heaven. In these visitations, he is preparing our souls for life, enjoyment, and activity, in a higher sphere. Even in those which give us most pain, we may recognise a Parent's love. By scenes of tribulation,

he snatches us from dangers which might destroy our immortal souls.

Looking back on our past life, we feel that we have seldom been right, that we have yielded to wretched dissipation. Our thoughts, affections, and pursuits, have all wandered from God. We have acted as if we hated his name, or at least as if he were unworthy of our thoughts. Marvellous is the forbearance which has beheld such wickedness, yet permitted us to live. Oh! how evil our words and doings have been, how corrupt our hearts; and how boundless must that mercy be, which, despite of these, has spared us so long,

and granted time for repentance!

Now, duly awake to the error of our ways, musing with appropriate veneration, to the merits of a suffering Redeemer, let us solemnly resolve, in the presence of our God, to endure, if possible, with perfect serenity, at all events with humble submission, whatever grief it may be his will that we should experience. Let us be prepared, when he approaches with the cup of suffering, unshrinkingly to demand, "Whom seekest thou?" Looking up to him at Gethsemane, at Jerusalem, and at Golgotha, we humbly trust we shall be able to keep the promise we now make, to bear patiently, and to endure unrepiningly, all the trials that God may have reserved for us. When our strength fails, we will resort to prayer, as the Saviour did.

Though exhausted, we shall then revive, and be enabled to look forward, with pious hope, to the coming moment, when we shall reach those seats of bliss, which pain and grief cannot approach, where trouble will be unknown, where care cannot interrupt happiness, and where tribulation can never more cause apprehension. Buoyed up by this view of futurity, each coming day will be cheerful, each night free from gloom; and even the night of death, cheerful and radiant with blessed hope.

THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN SEEKS TO BE USEFUL TO OTHERS.

Knowledge and virtue are undoubtedly the chief ornaments of human nature, and to be engaged in the pursuit of those, is an endeavour to carry it to its greatest improvement and perfection. To come into the world for such an end, might well reconcile us to the infirmities and miseries we are subject to here; and to go out of it with such a disposition, would lead us to real happiness hereafter. To be useful, then, in our station, to be virtuous in our temper, and firmly attached to the interests of truth, liberty, and religion, is the way to be happy, both in life and death.

What led my thoughts to this subject, was the death of a very worthy minister; a master in our Israel, Dr. Isaac Watts,

who was buried the last week.

"He was possessed of many great talents, and valuable qualifications for the benefit of mankind. His light shined, and his influence spread to good advantage. He contributed much to the improvement of one part of Christian worship, by his sacred and divine hymns; as he promoted the spirit of true vital religion by his practical works. He was happy in a lively imagination, and extensive knowledge, by which he was the more able to instruct and please. He was very solicitous to give an early bias to young minds towards religion, and for that end furnished them with some pleasing exercises for their entertainment; for which he had the thanks of many, whilst he lived, and generations to come will rise up, and call him blessed. He had such a compassion for the honest prejudices of mankind, that he thought it his duty to soften them by every compliance, consistent with truth and faithfulness: and would even venture his credit and interest with his friends, by endeavouring to explain what seemed harsh, difficult, and dividing, in such a manner, as might unite good men more cordially to one another. His long and useful labours in the Christian church, amidst the infirmities of a breaking constitution, claim this public testimony of respect. The close of so useful a life will be suitably attended with a meditation on the rest and reward, which good men enter upon at death. 'And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.'

Dr. Milner.

## MORNING.—MARCH 21.

GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN EXEMPLIFIED.

My God! thy boundless love we praise. How bright on high its glories blaze—
How sweetly bloom below!
It streams from thy eternal throne;
Thro' heaven its joys for ever run,
And o'er the earth they flow.

Fis Love that gilds the vernal ray—Adorns the flow'ry robe of May—Perfumes the breathing gale:
"Tis Love that loads the plenteous plain, With blushing fruits and golden grain, And smiles o'er ev'ry vale.

But, in thy Gospel, it appears
In sweeter fairer characters,
And charms the ravish'd breast:
There, Love immortal leaves the sky
To wipe the drooping mourner's eye,
And give the weary rest.

Rippon's Collection.

GOD WILL NOT NEGLECT THE SUPPLICATIONS OF HIS WORSHIPPERS. PSALM CII.

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily.

3 For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top. 8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink

with weeping.

10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 My days are like a shadow that declineth: and I am withered like grass.

12 But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

13 Thou shalt rise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

he dust thereof.

15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and

all the kings of the earth thy glory.

16 When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in

his glory.

17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not

despise their prayer.

18 This shall be written for the generation to come; and

the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.

# THE CHRISTIAN MAY DEPEND ON SUPPORT FROM ABOVE.

"Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble." With this prayer we come to day before God. If we depend wholly upon our own strength, we cannot but be thrilled with apprehension for that which may await us in our future pilgrimage, as we progress towards thee and heaven. We, weak as we feel our hearts, and great as we know the dangers to be, which beset our path, feel incapable of directing our own steps, and cannot but fear, that like many of our brethren, we shall wander from the road to perish with them. Of ourselves, we are incapable of resisting the temptations which assail us every day, and of escaping those delusions and errors, which cause so many to deviate from truth and virtue, and fall into hopeless perdition. Sensible of this, we claim thy aid, we pray to thee, O Lord! Hear our appeal, and consider our trouble.

But let us carefully examine ourselves. Even while uttering this prayer, are we not conscious that it is not breathed in vain? Is not the presence of the Deity felt in the mere thought that our cases are laid before him? It strengthens our hearts and refreshes our courage. The eternal Father has condescended to bestow upon us

another support, by sending to the world his son —the faithful guide to everlasting happiness, and this enables us to say with the apostle—"We can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us." Would that we might, at all times, be strengthened

by him!

Happily, however, at this moment, we possess within ourselves, so we are persuaded, all things necessary to that end-all but that courage which would enable us to follow the Great Captain, whose name we bear, and whose profession we do not scruple to call ours ;-the courage of encountering any danger, any trouble, and every self-denial. If we possess not this courage, or if we often lose it, is not the cause of this deficiency to be found in the weakness of our nature, which such as we prove it, is not that of an angel? Is it our own fault? We feel much inclined to prefer the former alternative, and to plead the weakness of mortality; but to do that, would be to accuse thee, Oh God! our all-wise Creator, who hast given us this nature. Such accusation we dare not prefer. No; we will not do so. Not thus at the last great day, can we presume to answer to our judge. Through his infinite goodness may we there find mercy, but before him, vain words and idle apologies cannot prevail. The very idea of such a presence is sufficient to drive from our minds the idea of employing frivolous excuses. They may, indeed, impose upon a sinful generation, pure in their own eyes, though not cleansed from their sins, but not on the true Christian. He knows his own weakness; knows how little he can rely on his good works, and prudently declines to lean on broken reeds.

Let us not deceive ourselves into a belief that we are not answerable for our sins-let us not take up the idea that they are inseparable from humanity. We will rather frankly confess that our misdeeds are all our own. If we want firmness to live in this world as the followers of a crucified Saviour ought to live, that is to say, in truth, honesty, chastity, and godliness; if we want courage to use our own strength to go through the severe struggle, against the evil propensities of our hearts, and the vices of the age, without yielding to their seductions; -if we have not courage to defy wounds, and even death, in strife against evil, within and without, we must perish unless aid is supplied from above. Be it then our task to implore our Creator on each succeeding day, to strengthen us, and renew the courage that may lift us above the snares which surround

us, and further the fulfilment of our high destiny. Incessantly to this end let us raise our voices to the Lord in heaven, who can order all things, and to whom nothing is impossible. We will bear in mind, that Christ is ever near to us while we live; we will think that he sent to us the spirit of truth, of power, and of consolation, which proceeds from the Father. It will also assist us, to bear in our minds the history of those undaunted champions, to whom the world owes that glorious victory which the gospel gained, after long and bloody wars, over the powers of darkness; and above all, we will fix our attention on their blessed reward in heaven, and be strong in the assurance, that whoever is fighting for Christ, is fighting for God, and must eventually conquer, for he will not be left without divine assistance. Invigorated by these meditations, and solemn exercises, we hope steadily to pursue our way, superior to temptation, and prepared for every trial. Our thoughts shall be wholly directed to that which, in heaven, will one day form our business and our happiness. There will we place our every hope; there, alone, look for happiness. The blessings and privileges earned for us by our Redeemer, shall be dearer to us than everything else we know; and that we may largely participate in them, we will incessantly pray, in the hope that a pardoning God will look down upon us with compassion, and relieve our sad bosoms from all the troubles which now oppress them.

## THE SOOTHING INFLUENCE OF PRAYER.

My dear Cousin,-A letter from your brother Frederic brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke with that resignation to his will which none but Himself can give, and which he gives to none but his own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a throne of grace! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer which are withheld from millions: and the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put in your hand. May He now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace in the midst of trouble. He has said, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." You have need of such a word as this, and he knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time when he will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in him, I bear you and yours upon my heart before him night and day, for I never expect to hear of distress which call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am,

and believe, and am sure, that he will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in his holy habitation; in all our afflictions he is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely he will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor pain; but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. Oh, that comfortable word! "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" so that our very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and he chastens us because we are his children.

My dear cousin, I commit you to the word of his grace, and to the comforts of his holy spirit.

Cowper.

## EVENING .- MARCH 21.

THE ALMIGHTY'S POWER SEEN IN HIS BOUNTY.

God of the hills and verdant plains, I bless thy ruling hand; For drifting snows, and gentle rains Are sent by thy command.

The opening Spring is decked by thee,
With each delighted flower
And every leaf and bud I see,
Bear impress of thy power.

The ripening Summer's burning sum The Winter's piercing cold, The changing seasons as they run, Thy wisdom, Lord, unfold.

The joy that centres in my cot,
No less thy wisdom owns!—
With rural happiness my lot,
I cannot envy thrones.

Love dwells within my peaceful breast At every morning's dawn; And when the sun sinks in the west, My cares are all withdrawn.

Although secluded from the mart
Where crowd the thoughtless way—
Where in the scenes that vex the heart,
Men waste their lives away.

Beside the hill, the purling brook—Glad nature's fond retreat—With gratitude to thee I look,
And songs of joy repeat.

For lot so blest, my voice I raise,
Almighty God, to thee;—
Thou needest not an angel's praise,
Much less such praise from me.

But I will bless thy bounteous hand,
For all thy gifts bestowed;—
Before my heart could understand,
Ten thousand thanks I owed.

Anon

THE WORKS OF THE LORD ARE GREAT. PSALM CIV.

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

2 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flame of fire:

5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

7 At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.

8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.

9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

asses quench their thirst.

12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches.

13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is

satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

16 The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

17 Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house.

18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats: ana the rocks for the conies.

19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down

20 Thou makest darkness, that it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth.

21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

#### NATURE AWAKENING FROM THE SLEEP OF WINTER.

The goodness and power of the Almighty have ever been the subject of devout admiration. How finely is their grandeur displayed in scripture!— "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass and herb." His voice was sufficient; the fiat was obeyed. Thus he speaks, even now. Were we not witnesses of it this day, in the open fields, while noting the return of spring, and the first movements of vegetable life? Does not the mag-

nificent spectacle of reviving nature fill our souls with wonder, admiration, and joy? In this general renovation, we have renewed instances of that greatness and benevolence which is preparing, unseen to mortal eye, an increase of blessings for all that live. How lively the idea thus furnished, of the greatness of the Lord of all! What comfort it ought to impart! how greatly it ought to delight and elevate the soul!

Oh Thou! in whom we live, and move, and have our being, how vast, how wonderful, is thy glory! How immense is thy influence on inanimate nature, which is still so powerfully moved! The understanding tries in vain to entertain the subject with appropriate solemnity. Thy mysteries we cannot fathom; thy laws we cannot expound; it is only for us to wonder and adore.

Yet, in the midst of our darkness, this at least we can perceive, that it is thy Spirit which animates, arranges, and combines the endless varieties of creation, so as to form one glorious whole. In the words of the English poet, Addison,—

"The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate; Puzzled with mazes, and perplexed with errors, The understanding traces them in vain; Nor sees with how much art the winding runs, Nor where the regular confusion ends."

Wherever we turn our eyes, we can see enough to give our minds the fullest conviction that infinite wisdom, and unbounded goodness to man, presides over the world. How much ought our hearts to be gladdened, looking forward to those days which, in the proper season, will open still wider thy fatherly hand !-when thou wilt change the hope now inspired into certainty, the germ into blossom, the blossom into fruit! How glorious the scene, how vast the privilege accorded to man, looking on objects like these, to enjoy the coolness of the evening, after enduring necessary toil through the brightness of the day! Again we look forward to behold the rich gifts of the Almighty, bestowing on the earth the fulness of renewed beauty. Again our delighted eyes expect to contemplate the wonders of Omnipotence and Wisdom. "Oh, then, let our grateful souls bless the Lord, and forget not all his benefits."

But, too frequently, those benefits have been forgotten, as surveyed by the careless and incurious eye; and when winter, with its inclemency, and attendant privations, have been experienced, or when sickness, care, and apprehension have

temporarily disturbed us, how weakly, how sinfully have we repined at the dispensations of Providence. Sinners that we are, our consciences must condemn us before the Almighty. We must plead guilty before the eternal bar. Though the treacherous, self-corrupted heart may make excuses, and say, in a qualifying tone, that if in some cases it has erred, it was less criminal than might have been supposed, and some extenuating circumstances must be admitted;—though this may be whispered, it cannot satisfy the mind awake to the truth; it can plead nothing in arrest of judgment, to prevent the sentence of God going forth against us, to make us at once the objects of his justice and his wrath.

It is only by contemplating the graciousness of the Supreme Being, that we can feel consoled under the weight of sin we know to be ours. When we see how we have overcome, by his aid, the toils and inclemency of winter, and reached the cheerful, brilliant days of spring, may we not hope, that he whose good care we here recognise, will be with us, and watch over our welfare in the winter of life, and the night of age? Yes, he will enable us to overcome their terrors, to survive their gloom, and permit us to rejoice in that eternal spring which is reserved for his true worshippers, in heaven. The glories of the opening season are to man a cheering summons, an animated exhortation to throw all his cares upon the Lord

To this summons, to this exhortation let our exulting spirits respond, with suitable gratitude. Let nature, with its riches and inexhaustible blessings, its benefits in gifts, reassure the pilgrim, as he advances on life's road; let them wake sublime hopes, and strengthen and confirm his faith in God. That the Almighty loves man, is proved by the care with which he watches over him here. Of that care the evidences are so striking, that they ought to carry conviction to every mind. Let them be viewed as a guarantee that we shall never want that which is really essential to our welfare. That mighty hand which is now clothing the trees with such surpassing magnificence, which provides for and nourishes irrational creatures,—the great, wise, and bounteous Being who does all this, will assuredly take due care of man, whom he created in his own image, and to whom he sent his only-begotten Son, that, through his merits, we might obtain everlasting life.

#### CHRISTIAN RESOLUTION EXEMPLIFIED.

The court being assembled, the archbishop called for a mass-book, on which the prelates, doctors, and others were formally sworn that all and each would faithfully perform his duty; and that neither for favour nor fear, love nor hate, of the one party or the other, should anything there be witnessed, spoken, or done, but according to the truth, as they should answer it before God and all the universe at the day of doom. The notaries were also sworn to record impartially, what might be advanced on either side.

The archbishop then said, "Lord Cobham, you are well aware of the proceedings had in your case on Saturday last past. They are too long to be now rehearsed. Suffice it to say you were then accused of contumacy and disobedience, in the hope that, acknowledging your fearful error, you would, with all meekness and submission, have prayed for abso-

The prisoner was neither soothed nor intimidated by being reminded of the former doings. He seems to have considered that his course was run, and that all attempts to conciliate those before whom he stood must necessarily fail. With this impression, he replied-

"God saith, by his holy prophet, Maledicam benedictionibus vestris, which is equal to declaring that he will curse those

who receive your blessing,

The archbishop took no notice of this, but went on: "At that time I offered to absolve you, if absolution were asked. I now repeat the offer, if it be sought with due submission, and according to the form which Holy Church has ordained."
"That will I not do," said Cobham, "for against you have

I never trespassed."

Then kneeling on the pavement, and raising his hands, he

looked towards heaven and solemnly exclaimed-

"I shrive me here unto thee, O! my eternal living God, that in my frail youth I offended thee, Lord, most grievously, in pride, wrath, gluttony, and lechery. Many men have I huit in my anger, and many other horrible sins have I committed, for which, O Lord! I humbly crave thy mercy." Tears burst from his eyes while he spoke, and compelled him for a moment to pause; but, soon recovering himself, he proceeded with increased energy of voice and manner: "Lo, good people, for the breaking of God's law and his great commandments, these grave prelates and doctors never yet cursed me : but for offending against laws of their own, and doubtful traditions, most cruelly do they humble me, as they have done others; and therefore it will in the end be seen that they and their laws, in accordance with what is promised in the word of God, shall be utterly destroyed."

Life of Lord Cobham.

## MORNING, MARCH 22.

THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY.

Oh! if it were not for the hope That when life's pilgrimage is o'er, Mercy, Man's sweet apologist, Would guide his spirit to a shore Where Peace awaits the broken heart, Where Faith its bright reward shall gain, How mournful were the earthling's lot. How hard its crosses to sustain.

Oh! if it were not for the hope That we one day shall re-unite With those lamented ones, whose love Made Earth a region of delight, In that eternal summer-land Where farewell tears no longer flow,-How ceaseless our regret for flowers O'er which no second spring might glow '

This hope, to an offending world, Is the Almighty's noblest dower, It throws a fadeless halo round Mortality's expiring hour: It whispers, with an angel voice, That we shall join that glorious throng Who raise, before Messiah's throne, Salvation's never-ending song!

Harcourt.

#### WISDOM TO BE SOUGHT FROM GOD. II. CHRON. I.

3 Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness.

4 But the ark of God and David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he

had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

5 Moreover the brasen altar, that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the Lord: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.

6 And Solomon went up thither to the brasen altar before the Lord which was at the tabernacle of the congregation. and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.

7 ¶ In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said

unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

8 And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.

9 Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

10 Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this

thy people, that is so great?

11 And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

12 Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall

there any after thee have the like.

13 ¶ Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Israel.

#### A SOURCE OF STRENGTH PREPARED FOR THE WEAK.

"Keep his way," is the wise counsel of the holy poet. Though the advice is not less kind than wise, difficult, very difficult is it for weak sinners to follow it! Prone as we are to error. even the first steps are taken with pain and labour; and Oh! how hard is it to follow them

up with undeviating consistency. We have, however the consolation to know that God has promised to be mighty in the weak, and to create, in those who piously invoke his aid, a disposition to act according to his will. He has ordained all men to be saved. This is distinctly declared to be the will of our heavenly Father, in the holy record of his word. To that we must accustom ourselves to fly for comfort. The Saviour had recourse to them for the expression of his feelings in his severest misery. If we regard the passage repeated by him on the cross as prophetic, he had a reason for using it to which we cannot pretend; but we may, without impropriety, avail ourselves of scripture language when it is clearly applicable to our character and circumstances. situations that we can know or imagine, they offer admonitions salutary and beneficial. them, when our hearts are too much engaged with the ordinary concerns of life, we are impressively reminded of things above, where Jesus is seated at the right hand of God. To exalted themes our desires are then raised, and by looking above it, we render ourselves fitter to live in the world. When hope becomes feeble, and faith grows lukewarm, there do we find the means of refreshing our fainting spirits with the waters of life, whose streams make glad the city of our God. New light breaks in upon us, our moral strength is renovated,—our thoughts, our conversations, are all of heaven, and we may be said, while still in the flesh, to commune with our great Creator. When difficulties press upon us severely, and we find ourselves unhappily entangled in the snares of life, there we learn how to pray that we may be spared temptation, and we are taught how to avoid transgression. The lesson is rich in consolation; blessed are its fruits; we rise superior to sorrow, and gracious promises of pardon are found to encourage and recal the wanderer to hope and joy. There, all the various duties which devolve upon us in life, are clearly laid down, in language simple, but expressive. In all our troubles we may derive consolation from its pages. We feel that a gracious Protector watches over our every step; the wrongs we sustain from the wicked and the scorner, are forgotten; and even affliction, consecrated to our use, becomes the source of unnumbered blessings. We learn there, that an eye which never sleeps, is fixed upon us, and the grave stripped of its terrors, appears before us but as the vehicle which is to convey our happy spirits to the realms of everlasting repose.

There we are instructed in the love of God, and led out of darkness into marvellous light, and we glow with rational exultation at the prospect a blessed Providence opens to our view.

We must not suspect ourselves too much, and we may not remain supinely indolent, under the impression that we can do nothing towards furthering our own salvation. Such an excuse we must cease to plead, when the truth is, we are only faint-hearted and inconstant. Every exertion must be made by the Christian, to change the infirmity of his heart into lasting strength. and his zeal in the cause of the Most High should manifest itself, under all circumstances, strong both in word and in deed. We must kindle in our souls the lively conviction that we shall eventually succeed in our great design, to keep the laws of God. That this is in our power, admits of no rational doubt; for ours is the high privilege of walking in the light of Jesus; of having his glorious example before our eyes, and his blessed promises impressed on our hearts. Praise be to his holy name, who gave us life and understanding. the light that is within us has not become darkness, although it may often for a time be obscured; for we are, and that by the advantages just mentioned, independent of the world, protected against its deception, armed against its might. Oh yes! weak as we are, we can be strong, if we have faith in the word of God; for faith is the victory which overcometh the world. Though we are children of dust, we are also citizens of heaven. The Christian feels, that while here, he is

"The heir of glory, a frail child of dust,"

We are of divine origin, and know that we possess within ourselves the strength, if we have but the determined will, to deny ourselves the vanities of life, to conquer our grovelling propensities, and to "overcome evil with good;" to scorn the lusts, the glories, and the perishing treasures of this world, and to be faithful to the Lord, who has condescended to call us, by Christ, to himself. He has conciliated and reconciled us to him, and given us the right to look upon ourselves as the children of his love. Since we are endowed with this sustaining and holy persuasion, we are able to reject, with virtuous scorn, that which at first moves our desires, and to choose what is at the moment repugnant to our senses, rather than indulge in sinful delights. So assisted, we can serve the Lord, and scorn Mammon and Belial;

we can bless those that curse us, do good to those that hate us, pray for those who despitefully use us, and appear before men true and obedient children to our Father who is in heaven. Weak as we may sometimes feel, all this we are enabled to do, because thou, Lord, in thy bounty, art pleased to render us mighty; because we have had the happiness to learn to live in communion with thee, and in the imitation of our Saviour, and because we have a heavenly vocation. If such the advantages which we possess, away with weak despondency! Men and angels shall see us prepared to fight the good fight, and duly provided with weapons appropriate to the all-important strife, by assiduously calling upon thy holy name, and by constantly bearing in mind, that we are the objects of thy peculiar care. To compass this, we will, from day to day, earnestly give our best attention to thy heavenly revelation, and the experience of human life. By these means we may say, without offensive presumption, we shall, "keep thy way," and be faithful unto death, and receive, after we have been emancipated from the thraldom of mortality, the crown of eternal bliss. Deign, Oh gracious Saviour! to assist with thy sustaining smile, that we may ever adhere to this resolution.

### KNOWLEDGE TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH PIETY.

Ere the conscience can be fully developed, we must store the mind with a certain portion of knowledge, and in some measure cultivate the understanding; or conscience will remain dark and supine from the want of the light of moral intelligence. There must be the evolution of the whole man ere there be the evolution of any part of his nature; and previous acquisition must be preparatory to the attainment of that ideal character for which his faculties are to be exercised and improved. It is also necessary in order to gain a thorough acquaintance with the scriptures. To establish their evidences, and to understand and appreciate their contents, a knowledge of science and of general history is indispensable. It is required, also, for the support and defence of religion, which can only suffer in the employ of science and philosophy, "falsely so called." It is certainly every man's duty to associate all that is intelligent, amiable, and dignifying, with "the wisdom which is from above;" and to redeem and protect it from the calumny cast upon it by sectarian blindness and bigotry, false learning, and popular ignorance.

Let us next refer to the scriptures to ascertain the mind of the Spirit, and the evidence becomes stronger, so as to leave us without doubt. If the advocates of ignorance are justified in their conclusion, they must be plainly deducible, if not directly, at least inferentially, from its pages. But, as just stated, scripture not only sanctions, but also requires an extensive acquaintance with the present material economy, with the order, energies, and changes of Nature, the growth of its productions, and the accomplishment of its results; repudiating none but "vain philosophers," and undervaluing no science but that which is "falsely so called." To reason for the contrary, would be to place religion under the guardian-

ship of ignorance; an alliance which she indignantly scorns. The scriptures plainly and directly recognise both the importance and usefulness of secular wisdom. Though the encomiums heaped upon wisdom in the Proverbs, refer principally to heavenly wisdom, yet there are numerous passages which, with equal certainty, if not with similar force, commend secular wisdom. Other parts of scripture are equally conclusive to the same effect. What can be more so than the following statements and injunctions, as well as what more obvious and striking, than the truths they enforce? "That the soul be without knowledge is not good." "Wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that it giveth life to them that have it." The writer here means to assert the superior excellency of wisdom over riches. "Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness." "Apply thine heart unto instruc-tion, and thine ears to the words of knowledge." "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times." And, says one who probably had no written revelation, "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they will tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea, and they shall declare unto thee-who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this; in whose hand is the soul of every living thing." And the prophet Daniel, depicting the Millenial era, declares it to be the prominent characteristic of that blessed period, that "knowledge shall run to and fro in the Dr. Edwards earth.'

## EVENING.—MARCH 22.

LIGHT FROM HEAVEN INVOKED.

Oh God! the cloud of ignorance
Hangs over Pagan lands;—
Send forth thy messenger of truth
To those benighted strands.
Command the dawn of Gospel-light
Its cheering rays to shed
O'er hearts, untouched by Christian grace,
To Christian virtues dead.

Oh! may the heralds of thy Word
Its saving power proclaim,
Inspiring Afric's dusky sons
To praise Messiah's name:
And, as within the cottage-homes
O'er-arched by milder skies,
Beneath the Indian's wigwam rude,
May strains of worship rise.

Grant that the ice-fields of the north,
The prairies of the west,
The trackless deserts of the east,
May have their altars dressed,—
In place of flowers, (that, bright to-day,
To-morrow lose their bloom,—)
With hearts that, through the Cross, have won
Deliverance from the tomb.

Lord! bless the ministry of those Who seek, in every clime, For heirs into Eternity, Amid the sons of Time; And let Salvation's standard be On heathen shores unfurled, Until the Sun of Righteousness Skine over all the world!

Harcourt.

#### WALK IN LOVE. EPHESIANS V.

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the LORD: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and right-eousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but s wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit:

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord:

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of

#### MAN'S INGRATITUDE.

"Consider him that endured much contradiction of sinners against himself." This is the commandment of the Church, especially at that holy period of the year, at which we have arrived; and what hours could be more better suited for meditation so serious, than those of the evening? Now, solemn silence reigns; the tumult and bustle of active life, which prevailed through the day, have ceased, and a holy calm invites us to turn our thoughts to sacred things. worldly business demands our attention; and we may commune with that gracious Redeemer, who suffered for man's transgression, without offence to our fellows, and without being exposed to interruption. In the course of the day which has closed, it may be, that while many circumstances have pressed on our attention, to afford us plea-

sure-to reward our efforts to avoid sin, many others have grieved our spirits, and have filled our hearts with sorrow. But though sorrow should rend our bosoms, it is not for us to complain. Do we not know that our Lord and Saviour, who never sinned, had to submit to the most awful inflictions, and had bitter experience of the hateful ingratitude of those, he came to save? To be marked and pursued with cruel hostility, by men whom he had laboured to serve, was his melancholy fate. Yet, for the like, our minds ought to be prepared. Who shall venture to calculate on the kindly feelings and on the thankfulness of men, when even our Lord could not command them? Can any one think of doing good and being rewarded with thanks and applause, who knows how Jesus was treated? Will any show a better claim to gratitude than he had? That we are not daring enough for a moment to imagine, vet still, weakness comes over us, and we are sad and disappointed when men prove unmindful of our endeavours to succour them. Then our zeal abates, and good deeds commenced, are, alas! left incomplete. Selfish, and vain-glorious, even in our charity, we desire to see our liberality—our philanthropic sentiments proclaimed to the world, and our names exalted before men. The sacrifices we pride ourselves for making, in order to benefit others, we expect to see made the theme of praise, and hope to be largely rewarded for them. Such is the vain and mercenary character of the human heart.

Yet this is not the part which, as christians, we ought to act. This is doing anything but treading in the steps of that illustrious Captain, whom we profess to follow. Far from being honoured and benefitted by those whom he had served, he submitted to every wrong, to every indignity, fiery malice, and cold-hearted ingratitude could offer; "led like a lamb to the slaughter," he complained not "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, he opened not his mouth." Though guiltless—more than guiltless; though transcendant merit was his, still he submitted to outrages, infinitely greater than those which disturb our peace, in obedience to the will of the Eternal, and "when reviled, reviled not again." To the righteous Judge of all, to him alone he looked for ultimate redress, content when his pain was most intolerable, that the will of the Father, who sent him, should be satisfied, though his own anguish remained unabated. Knowing this, if we aspire to share his glory, ought we to faint under the

comparatively slight visitations, we may from time to time deplore, growing out of the cruelty of mankind.

It behoves us to act a nobler part. We ought not to grow indifferent, because our deeds are not immediately appreciated and requited here, as we flatter ourselves they deserve to be. Shall we allow the mournful weakness to come over us. that disqualifies us for doing any good for the love of God alone, and from a sacred sense of duty? When we recognise in ourselves such a disposition, at what an immeasurable distance are we thrown from that Saviour, whose conduct we presume to regard as a model for our imitation. Where is the pure benevolence which in him sublimely trampled over the blackest ingratitude? Alas! we find not even a shadow of it in ourselves. How satisfactory would it be; how greatly would it administer to the peace of our hearts could we rise to the height of that pure love of duty, which would defy disappointment and thanklessness to shake its zeal. Happier far should we be, could we remain conscientious, faithful and unwearied labourers in the cause of truth and charity, however unsatisfactory the first result of our exertions might prove. Great would be our felicity, if we learnt from our divine Redeemer how to bear scorn and persecution, with firmness and resignation, wherever we may encounter them, so we had the inward solace of knowing, these were brought upon us not by our own misconduct.

Greatly would such a frame of mind cheer us, as we advance on our journey. Why then should we not solemnly resolve, before the searcher of all hearts, and promise, having full in our minds the recollection of him who was scourged, mocked, and nailed to the cross, that selfishness and vanity shall no longer have empire over us; that our good works shall be stained by their influence no more? Our zeal for the happiness of our brethren, shall not again be repressed by the absence of reward. No mockery, no hatred of the world shall overawe, so as to make us betray the cause of truth. This purpose, the example of our Saviour ought to strengthen and sustain. We must show our love and devotion to him, by striving to imitate his conduct. Not here, but in another world, we will look for our reward, from the justice and bounty of a merciful God, to those who love him, and keep his commandments. It was this all-consoling thought which animated our crucified Redeemer. A prospect so blissful renewed his courage, when he entered the valley of the shadow of death. It enabled him to bear with patience "the contradiction of sinners against himself," and to endure all the outrages offered to him with such magnanimous forbearance, when one of the chosen twelve answered his love with the most revolting treachery; and from the same cause his most painful experience failed to subdue his zeal and love for those he came to earth to save, and could not shake his original determination.

O, be thou blessed, who art coming in the name of the Lord!—friend of mankind, while our hearts continue to beat, faithful to duty, they shall be all thine own. To thee, we offer the tribute of our veneration and love, and as thou hast lived and suffered, and died, we will covet to live, to suffer, and to die, that we may finally be united for evermore to those blessed spirits whom thou hast owned as thine.

#### GOODNESS COMES FROM GOD, EVIL IS OF THE FLESH.

It cannot stand with the goodness of God to be the principal; and neither with his goodness nor greatness to be an accessory, in any sinful action. He cannot be either the author, or the abettor of any thing that is evil. Whoso, therefore, hath committed any sin, let him take heed he do not add another and a worse to it, by charging God with it: rather let him give God and his Spirit glory, by taking all the blame and shame of it to himself and his own flesh. All sinful works are works of the flesh. Secondly, it is clear also, that all the holy affections and performances here mentioned, with all other Christian virtues and graces, accompanying salvation, not here mentioned, though performed immediately by us, and with the free consent of our own wills, are yet the fruit of God's Spirit working in us. That is to say, they do not proceed originally from any strength of nature, or any inherent power in man's free-will; nor are they acquired by the culture of philosophy, the advantages of education, or any improvement whatsoever of natural abilities by the helps of art or industry; but are in truth the proper effects of that supernatural grace which is given unto us by the good pleasure of God the Father, merited for us by the precious blood of God the Son, and conveyed into our hearts by the sweet and secret inspirations of God the Holy Ghost. "Love, joy, peace," &c. are fruits, not at all of the flesh, but merely and entirely of the Spirit.

All those very many passages in the New Testament, which either set forth the unframeableness of our nature to the doing of anything that is good,—"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought;" "In me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing," and the like: or else ascribe our best performances to the glory of the grace of God,—"Without me you can do nothing;" "All our sufficiency is of God;" "Not of yourselves, it is the gift of God:" "It is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed," and the like, are so many clear confirmations of the truth. Upon the evidence of which truth it is, that our mother, the church, hath taught us in the public service to beg at the hands of Almighty God, that he would "endue us with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to his holy

word;" and again (consonantly to the matter we are now in hand with, almost in the same terms) that he would "give to all men increase of grace, to hear meekly his word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." As without which grace it were not possible for us to amend our lives, or to bring forth such fruits, according as God requireth in his holy word.

Bishop Sanderson.

## MORNING.-MARCH 23.

#### THE SPIRIT'S CRY.

My faltering lips in vain essay,
Almighty!—thy supernal name;
By thought opprest I cannot pray,
Much less thy wondrous love proclaim.
With strength beyond his wonted might,
Satan my cries would stifle still,
My spirit cloud in saddest night,
And question e'en thy saving skill!

He tells me sin is at my heart,
And that there lies no faith in prayer:
He bids me from thy courts depart,
Nor shed my fruitless sorrow there.
But I will pray, and I will weep—
Ah, would my tears were blood like thine,
Redeemer!—for, though sin be deep,
Thy mercy's boundless as divine.

'1 came not (blessed words!) to cal Repentance from the righteous breast; I came to loose transgression's thrall, And ease the heart by guilt distrest!' Such were thy words, Redeemer! Mine The sinner's thrall, the heart of guilt: Oh, break my bonds, my soul refine, For still on Thee my hopes are built!

O Saviour! when thy knee was bent,
And thy pure spirit poured in prayer,
His angel, from thy Father sent,
Then strengthened thee his will to bear.
The sinless if such terror rend,
How shall the sinful pray and live,
Unless the Comforter descend
To breathe new life, and Heaven forgive?

Roche.

## THE HUMBLE REMEMBERED BY THE ALMIGHTY. PSALM IX.

1 I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence:

4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.

7 But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.

8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a re-

fuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know thy name, will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek

11 Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

12 When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth

them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

13 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up

from the gates of death:

14 That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net in which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands Higgaion. Selah.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever.

#### SAVING EFFECTS OF PAINFUL VISITATIONS.

"Look upon our affliction and our pain, and forgive all our sins." How much cause have we to repeat this prayer, when we look back on our past doings! Have compassion upon us, O Lord! Thy mercy we implore, for our lives, we can too plainly discern, have been little but a constant opposition to thy will. Our hearts, wicked, deceitful, and vain, have never ceased to sin against thy holy law, and to neglect or contemn thy wise ordinances. For this, we suffer; for this we feel affliction, and all we can now do is, to implore thy forgiveness.

Inwardly we feel that we are not what we ought to be, and our desires are not such as can make us acceptable to thee. Through our whole earthly career the tendency of our thoughts has been evil —our motives have been impure, our actions have been impure, and most impure, the objects after which we sighed. The inclinations of our minds rendered us no fit objects of Almighty grace, for they were prompted by mean selfishness, or vain ambition. Love or wisdom had no part in them, nor were they suggested by fear of God, or a hope of gaining Heaven. On the contrary, we have acted as if it were our object, to ascertain how far Divine mercy could extend. Where can we safely say, our transgressions find their termination, seeing that if our deeds have been sinful, as well as our words, our thoughts in the inmost recesses

of our hearts, have offended still more daringly

against the Most High, than both.

Dreadful is the consciousness that comes over us from looking at the violated laws of our gracious Lord. They point to our moral ruin—to our death, not merely bodily death, but to the loss of the eternal soul. We look at the decree, and we read our own condemnation. In vain, now that our eyes are opened to the fatal course we have pursued, would we seek consolation, by saying, "well, if we have sinned, so have all the sons of Adam, and will not Heavenly mercy over-look deficiencies which are common to the rest of our fellow creatures?" We cannot but feel that we have had means of seeking our own salvation, which have not been possessed by others. Our guilt has been great, and God hateth all workers of iniquity. "Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believeth." His example, as Christians, we are bound to have constantly before our eyes. We must not fancy that our peace is made above, because we say we believe in Jesus; and reverence the great Redeemer's name. "The commandment of the Lord is pure." To deserve his love, man must be holy. He is not to rest easily satisfied with himself, but he must actively seek the good of others. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without good works, is dead also." Faith is not to be undervalued; but its real existence must be indicated by virtuous deeds. It is only thus that it can clearly be shewn, we prefer the smile of our Creator, to the perishing treasures of the earth which wither and fade away in the moment, when we think we can securely call them ours.

Have we remembered this in our progress towards eternity? Alas! no; folly and sin have marked it at almost every step. Of these, there has been a never-ceasing flow, from that source of rank impurity, our deprayed hearts, even from

childhood.

Those deeds which we have considered good, strictly examined, have little or no value. If they originated in no sordid calculations, they were performed, because so to act, was agreeable and natural to us, or at least, they required no prompt exertion. Such do these actions which we can recal appear to us now; but how many of our doings have been sinful, of which we have taken no note at the time—which have been carelessly done, and which cannot be remembered? We are now by grace only sufficiently awake to know that our affliction is deep, our re-

morse great, and that our manifold transgressions serving of punishment.

Wonderful! incomprehensible! is thy forbearance, O Father! We perceive it with equal joy and gratitude, nor can we cease to wonder and adore. But while our contemplation rests upon it, we hear these warning and admonishing words, "Dost thou not know, O man! that it is the goodness of God leads thee to repentance?" The voice we hear, and are resolute to obey; yes, the purpose is firm in our souls to devote all our powers to honour thee. Cheerfully will we walk in thy ways; and in all things, aspire but to conform to thy law. Our aim shall be only to conciliate the favour of our Almighty Parent, and no more to waste our energies in seeking the friendship, favour, or applause of short-sighted men. If we act in this spirit, the trials, which thou mayest send, will serve to disentangle us from the world. It will destroy the low desires of unearthly minds; it will

#### "Soften and amend the heart,"

if unhappily it have become hard; it will warm it, if it have become obdurate; and humble it if it have become proud. Misery even will serve to lead it towards felicity, by teaching us to pray, and the loss of worldly goods will serve to strengthen our faith. If then, Mighty Ruler of the Universe, thou, in thy wisdom, seest it is essential for our ultimate salvation, that we should prove sharper trials than we vet have known; let grief and pain, degradation and terror, fall on us; let all the ills which thou knowest are necessary to prove our constancy, be arrayed against our peace, but grant us strength to bear the infliction. If thou terrifiest our hearts, rejoice them afterwards, for it is thine to send grief, and also to bestow comfort.

While thus we presume to breathe our wishes, far be from us, O Father! the thought to prescribe to thee in what way thou art to manifest thy wisdom and thy love; or by what means our hearts shall be advanced nearer to thee. Do, O Lord! that which to thee seemest good. To all that it may be thy high pleasure to ordain, we desire to bow with reverence and true resignation. Yet look upon our afflictions and our pains, and forgive all our sins. Cast us not away from thy presence—let not thy Holy Spirit be withdrawn from us.

Through the day on which we are now entering, deign, Father, to assist and guide us with thy

paternal care. Still let thy forbearance be extended to our imperfections, and save our trembling souls from that everlasting perdition, to which we know, left to ourselves, they must be exposed. Let it be thy will to sanctify our spirits, and grant us willing hearts for the time to come, to observe all thy ordinances, and to yield obedience to thy

#### ALL HAVE SIANED AGAINST HEAVEN.

"This, then, is the case; you," said the spirit, in his most awful manner, addressing us all, I mean myself and companions, "you, once the great on earth, the favoured by circumstances,—you, to whom 'much was given,' and from whom, you were, therefore, well instructed 'much would be expected; '-you, possessing the means of largely benefitting the human race, and of contributing to make the world such as a benevolent Deity might look down upon with pleasure, -you, I say, it is in proof, forgot your sacred duty, betrayed your high trust, and surrendered your weak and wicked souls to luxury, avarice, and ambition, yet still audaciously presume that the virtue you were supposed to possess in the other world, entitles you to salvation in this, and dare to erect yourselves above those who were once your victims, and whose fearful crimes and melancholy fate may, with little difficulty, be traced to your corrupt and sinful doings. And great indeed the weight of charge against you would be, were it not known to the All-seeing Eye that those sufferers, though unfortunate, were not faultless. Mean and vicious, like yourselves, had you changed places, as their crimes would certainly have been yours, yours would unquestionably have been theirs. What they suffered through harsh inflic-tions by you; were but expiations for them. The power that abates your pride, does not, without measure, exalt their humility. All have erred, each in his degree, and, alas for the truth! to the extent of his capacity. It were fearful to tell what the whole mass would have to expect for their stubborn insolence and foul ingratitude to the Giver of all good, where justice—strict justice to be done. But the Eternal knows the weakness which he permitted to be yours, and the ignorance in which the wisest of you lived .- On this pleaon this alone-not on your merit must your hope be founded. 'Enter not into judgment with us, O Lord!' is the only prayer fit for the lips of the least sinful of your company, save the brief but expressive aspiration-'God be merciful to me a Many-coloured Life.

## EVENING.--MARCH 23.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

Lord, for ever at thy side, Let my place and portion be: Strip me of the robe of pride, Clothe me with humility.

Meekly may my soul receive All thy Spirit hath reveal'd; Thou hast spoken,-I believe, Though the prophecy were seal'd Quiet as a weaned child, Weaned from the mother's breast, By no subtlety beguil'd, On thy faithful word I rest.

Saints, rejoicing evermore, In the Lord Jehovah trust: Him in all his ways adore, Wise, and wonderful, and just.

Montgomery.

LET EACH FULFIL THE DUTIES OF HIS STATION. EPHESIANS, CHAP. VI.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother: which is the first commandment with promise;

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond

9 And, ve masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

#### FAITH MUST BE PROVED BY GOOD WORKS.

The deportment of our Saviour in his anguish, was not only striking in itself, but especially so from the effects which it produced on others. "Truly this was the Son of God," exclaimed the heathen centurion who witnessed his dying pangs on the cross. Though he was among these who were there to behold, it may be said to assist the executioners of the unoffending Jesus, affected by what he had seen, and by the manner in which the august sufferer bore the outrages offered to him, the death of Jesus so satisfied him, that it carried conviction to his heart, that he was indeed the Son of the Most High. Let us, like the centurion, profit from what we see on the cross. Horrible as the pangs were which he had to undergo, our Lord retained his wonted mildness, and, in the midst of his agony, was perfectly collected. Such was his composure, that even in that dreadful situation, he could commiserate and pardon the bleeding sinner by his side and prove himself awake to the calls of filial love and gratitude. Nor did he end there,—he prayed even for his tormentors, for the cruel enemies who mocked him. His death was indeed a sublime

subject for contemplation.

It is not for us to say whether our deaths will be mild and easy, or whether we may have to endure a severe and painful struggle. But this we know, that Christ has abolished death,—the death which knows no end,—and brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel. Like him we may rest assured, if faithful to the end, we shall conquer the bitterness of death, by the power of faith, if, at the close of our earthly career, we can look back on a life devoted to virtue and to God.

The efficacy of Christ's mediation promises us happiness beyond the grave; but let us be careful not to resemble those who say they admire the gospel, and rest wholly on the merits of Christ, and doing so, seem to think from them nothing more can be required. They are in no enviable state, who read the gospel only to collect excuses for their misdeeds, and find a short and easy way to salvation, without care, and with little thought. "We are all miserable wanderers," they say, "we can do nothing for ourselves, and Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." They, by their conduct, seem to think, that he not only came to save sinners, but to excuse sin. This is not the proper way of looking at his mission. We may hope to be saved by Christ; but we must prove our faith in him, by acting on his precepts, and by desiring to imitate the example which he placed before our eyes, by seeking to do good to others, and by leading a holy life. profession of belief in a crucified Saviour cannot place our souls in safety. If even the apostle found it necessary to strive for mastery over the weaknesses of his nature, and, as he expresses himself, "Keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway; we may collect, that though we cannot be saved by good works alone, yet still we must endeavour to associate such with our faith, if we desire eventually to rank with the followers of the Lamb.

May it be our happiness, when we find ourselves on the bed of death, to look back on a virtuous life, embellished by faith, and unstained by sin; a life which, by integrity and charity, has gained the esteem of men, and which, from its piety and zeal in the cause of truth, has found favour in heaven. In that case, death for us will have no sting. As our slumbers are soft and refreshing, after a faithful discharge of our duty in the course of the day, so shall we calmly repose in death, if we are steadfast in the faith, and true followers of Christ to the end. We shall feel assured that our departure from earth is but the necessary prelude to our entrance into heaven—to the blissful beholding of our Lord and our God.

Ought not such a conviction to be a sufficient defence against the terrors of dissolution? Ought they not to enable us to depart with cheerful composure, from a state of existence in which perfection is not to be attained; in which undisturbed peace and happiness are unknown, but where suffering, great and unavoidable, await us

at every stage.

are really children of God.

Oh! then, how important it is, that we should endeavour, while here, to live to faith, hope, and love; that when our final hour arrives, we may be prepared to quit the world as Jesus did, in the full confidence that we are passing to the bright home of our Almighty Father, and to eternal bliss. We shall then bear witness to those who may be spectators of our last moments, that we

With this in prospect, never, for the future, let us pass an evening, without carefully and impartially examining our hearts, and calling them to a strict account, for all they have done during the day. Those peaceful moments shall be deemed sacred, when, withdrawn from the stormy cares of the day, we can escape from the pain and the tumult of active life, and attune our hearts to gratitude and love, for all the blessings we have received. Let us discreetly and virtuously enjoy They will serve to confirm our hearts in them. all that is noble and good. So shall a blessed calm be ours, which will image to us the quiet, but elevate us above the horrors of the grave. Giving ourselves up to sleep for the night, let us fix our thoughts on that never-ending rest, to which our weary spirits shall be eventually introduced.

While here we live, God forbid that we should yield to that mental weakness, which would scare our minds from the contemplation of death. It ought to be cherished, not to interfere with the proper enjoyment of life, or to undermine our peace. The thought should be our daily companion. Let us give ourselves unreservedly to it, without hesitation or dismay. Its influence will be cheering and

salutary. It will remind and admonish our souls to be awake to sacred things. It will teach us how necessary it is that we should make the best use of our time, while here we remain, and induce us to strive with patient perseverance, to accomplish good works, that may fit and prepare us for eternal life. This being constantly present to the mind, when the last moment arrives, how well shall we be armed, how perfectly prepared to meet the angel of death! So fortified, we can look upon him without dismay, and, devoutly resigned, commit ourselves with unaffected confidence to the goodness of the great disposer of events, content to follow where the Saviour calls. Earthly sorrows will thus be no more, and fear unknown. The parting spirit will serenely pass into the hands of a merciful God.

VIRTUE OUR INTEREST, IN LIFE, AND IN DEATH.

I am astonished at the stupidity of any man, who can deny nimself the gratification of conscious integrity. The proud man must be a consummate blockhead to take such wearisome pains for a little extorted flattery of the most servile sort, and overlook the ready means of gaining general respect upon the noblest terms: Is it not an abuse of language, and an insult to common sense, for a silly fellow to announce himself to the world as a man of pleasure, when there is not an action in his life, but leaves a sting behind it to belie the character he professes? Can one fellow-creature find amusement in tormenting another? Is it possible there can be a recreation in malice, when it slanders the innocent; in fraud, when it cheats the unsuspecting; in perfidy, when it betrays a bene-factor? If any being, who does me wrong, will justify him-self against the wrong by confessing that he takes delight in injury, I will own to one instance of human depravity, which till that shall happen I will persist to hope is not in existence: The fact is that all men have that respect for justice, that they attempt to shelter their very worst actions under its defence; and even those contemptible pilferers of reputation, who would be as much unknown by their names as they are by the concealment of them, qualify (I am persuaded) the dirty deed they are about by some convenient phantom of offence in the character they assault; even their hands cannot be raised to strike without prefacing the blow by saying to themselves-This man deserves to die. - Foolish wretches, what computation must they make of life, who devote so great a portion of it to miseries and reproaches of their own creating!

Let a rational creature for once talk common sense to himself, and if no better words than the following occur to his thoughts, let him make use of them: he is heartily welcome to the loan.

'I know there is a period in approach, when I must encounter an enemy to my life, whose power is irresistible: this is a very serious thing for me to reflect upon, and knowing it to be a truth infallible, I am out of hope, that I can so far forget the terms of my existence, as totally to expel it from my thoughts. If I could see the precise hour, when this enemy will come, I would provide against it as well as I am able, and fortify my mind to receive him with such complacency as I could muster: but of this hour, I have, alas! no foresight; it may be this moment, or the next, or years may

intervene before it comes to pass. It behoves me then to be upon my guard. He may approach in terrors that agonize me to think of; he may seize my soul in the commission of some dreadful act, and transport it to a place whose horrors have no termination. I will not then commit this dreadful act, because I will not expose myself to that dreadful punishment: it is in my own choice to refrain from it, and I am not such a desperate fool to make choice of misery: If I act with this precaution, will he still appear in this shape of terror? Certainly he will not, nor can he in justice transport me to a place of punishment, when I have committed nothing to deserve it. Whither then will he convey me? To the mansions of everlasting happiness: Where are my fears? What is now become of his terrors? He is my passport, my conductor, my friend: I will welcome him with embraces, I will smile upon him with gratitude, and accompany him with exultation.'

Observer.

## MORNING.—MARCH 24.

#### RELIGION.

How dark and despairing existence would seem, What a desert this beautiful planet would prove If Omniscience had deigned not its sons to redeem, Divulging to all-"My religion is love!"

'Tis Religion that blesses and brightens this life, That cancels the curse, our first ancestor's doom; It pours balm on the turbulent waters of strife, And commands light to break through the chaos of gloom.

The penitent throws off the trammels of crime, The tears of the mourner and desolate cease. And unfelt is the pitiless ravage of Time, When Religion has whispered its errand of peace.

Harcourt.

#### THE WAYS OF GOD. ROMANS XI.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take

away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.
30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through

your mercy they also may obtain mercy

32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he

might have mercy upon all.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

#### ALL COMES FROM GOD.

"The Lord which stretched forth the heavens. and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man, within him," will also, so we trust, look down upon us with favour and with mercy through this day, and in the days which are to follow. Mean as we are, it is a comfort to our souls, to know that we are not insensible of our lowliness, and nothingness, and conscious that, left to ourselves, our utter want of merit, must prove fatal. Though humiliating the confession, we have cause to feel thankful to him who has taught us to know ourselves. Those who earnestly seek the Lord, are everywhere met with proofs of the Almighty's care, and timely exhortations to put our trust in him. His goodness is often especially shewn in allaying those cares which have pressed upon our spirits with almost annihilating force, by the wonderful cooperation of circumstances which our feeble minds could never have imagined. His goodness changes our afflictions into comfort, our grief into joy. By his all-bounteous hand, wants are displaced by abundance, and mourning gives place to heartcheering hope. All we can see or possess here below, we know is the gift of the Lord of heaven and earth. Poverty and wealth come from him: prosperity and misfortune, life and death.

Penetrated with this conviction, whatever may occur to disturb our peace, we ought to bear it with cheerful resignation, assured that it is the will of the Most High. It ought to awaken our minds, and lead us with sincere devotion to implore the mercy of our God. Keenly as we may feel the visitation, it ought to strengthen our con-

fidence in him.

Care-worn, dejected one, that art prostrate in the dust, sighing in unspeakable dismay, trembling under the apprehension that his righteous sentence will doom thee to everlasting sorrow, look up with hope; for notwithstanding thou hast sinned grievously, God can spare. He has sent thee joyful tidings. Be it known to thee

that the Majesty of heaven, foreseeing the weakness and the various wanderings into which the whole human race would fall, never designed pursuing us with rigorous severity, never decreed our eternal ruin. He himself prepared the way for a happy reconciliation, and therefore proclaimed to all, by his gospel, that life and everlasting glory were still open to man, by a course received through means suited to the purity of heaven. The course marked out was a marvellous one, which, familiar as it is to our thoughts and our tongues, we still cannot contemplate without amazement. To send his own Son to this world. was the decision of the Godhead. He came, the image of his Father, the partaker of his divine honours, to be not merely a teacher of righteousness, and a messenger of grace, but also a sacrifice for the sins of man.

When we are not sharply proved, when the Lord is seen approaching us in the most visible way, even then our foolish and wayward hearts recede the farthest from him. Forgetful of his goodness, they attach themselves to men, serve them, are eager to win their favour and applause, expecting all that is good will flow from such connection, or from their own exertions, and cease to repose their hope in the Lord of all. The mind becomes listless, is indifferent about doing good, and takes no delight in the service of God, but fixes its affections on the pleasures and vanities of this Such has been—we confess it with sincere regret, our own failing. How long shall we remain fondly devoted to mundane joys, and rely on men who are unable, or worse than that, though professing friendship, are unwilling to assist in the day of trouble? Bitter disappointment we may expect we shall yet have to suffer, ere we reach the close of life, for our great misconduct and culpable folly, if God should not extend to us his mercy, and, from time to time, save us from the consequence of our own ways, by his special interposition.

O may our hearts, awake to what they already owe to his love, prove sincerely grateful! Blessed and ever worshipped be our God! Good and upright is the Lord, and all his paths are paths of peace and mercy unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." Praised be his name, that he does not incline his ear to the foolish requests which in our blindness we prefer, nor grant the vain wishes of our souls, though he wisely, graciously bestows what may contribute to our real happiness. In all humility we acknow-

ledge, we admire the holiness of his decrees. Astonishment swells our bosoms, when we contemplate the vastness of his mercy. With true and profound emotions, we contemplate thy abounding love, O God! Whatever thou mayest ordain, we will desire to regard as emanating from it. Thou stretchest out thy paternal arm to us, and to thee we desire to resign ourselves. Thou drawest us towards thee, and thy guidance we desire to follow. Heaven is offered by its Eternal King, to humble, but penitent mortals. Thither we will endeavour to hasten, and feeling all the importance of a destiny so glorious, resist and disdain the sinful and alluring toys of earth; and thou, O Christ, our Saviour and our God! let thy mighty influence assist our efforts to gain that state of everlasting bliss, which the Omnipotent Father has prepared for his children.

## GOD CHASTENS, BUT WILL NOT CAST AWAY HIS SERVANTS.

How can a tree be corrupt which produces good fruits? How can a gracious Lord cast off those who delight in fearing and serving him? The supposition is repugnant to every just and sound view of the equity of the Divine government: God cannot act inconsistently with his own character and attributes. The Bible is the record of what He is, of his declarations to man, of his moral government, and of his dealings with his people. And what does the Bible proclaim? It tells us "God is love;" "he delighteth in mercy;" he "does not willingly afflict the children of men;" "in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." His moral government and the history of his dealings towards the most eminent saints is a powerful illustration of these truths. He may indeed infuse bitter ingredients in the cup of his children: all of them, in due time, taste the wormwood and the gall. It is a part of the covenant; the token of his love, and essential to the trial of their faith and to their purification. But that he ever administers what Cowper here painfully calls infernal ingredients is impossible. These elements of evil spring not from above but from below. They may occur, as in the case of Job, by a permissive Providence, but sooner or later, a divine power interposes, and vindicates his own wisdom and equity. We know from various sources of information, that Cowper fully admitted the force of this reasoning, and the justness of its application in every other possible instance, himself alone excepted. The answer to this assertion is that the equity of God's moral dealings admits of no exception. Men may change: they may act in opposition to their own principles, falsify their judgment, violate their most solemn engagements, and be influenced by the variation of time and circumstances. But this can never be true of the Divine nature. "I, the Lord, change not." "The same yesterday, to-day, and for "With him his no variableness, nor shadow of turning." "Have I ever been a wilderness unto Zion?"

Hayley's Life of Cowper.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 24.

CHRISTIAN ASPIRINGS.

Lord, let my spirit dwell
(Whilst I reside below)
Above this wretched world
Of misery and woe,
So that its griefs may ne'er dismay,
Nor charms delude my heart away.

I take my happy rest
In Thee, my God, alone,
And all my misery
I spread before thy throne;
I groan, and sigh, and long to see
My happy morn of liberty.

O mercy! mercy! Lorn,
Whilst yet the light is near;
My weary soul, involv'd
In deep confusion, cheer;
And raise me up, I long to be
Within a blessed view of Thee.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

#### GOD'S CREATIVE WORKS. JOB XXXVIII.

1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the

earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?

or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or

who laid the corner stone thereof?
7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons

of God shouted for joy?

8 Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth,

as if it had issued out of the womb?

9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick

darkness a swaddling band for it.

10 And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and

11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

#### THE STARS ATTEST THE CREATOR'S GOODNESS.

"And God said, Let there be light in the firmament of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and it was so." Meditating on this passage in scripture, in deep adoration, we raise our eyes in the evening to those innumerable worlds which declare to man the greatness and the glory of God. To those musings, it is good that we should willingly and cheerfully open our bosoms, which a spectacle so magnificent is calculated to produce. This, indeed, is a temple in which we can worthily worship our God. The starry heavens

manifest the infinity of his wisdom, and of his power. They lift our thoughts from the things of time, to the sublimer objects which are identified with eternity. The numerous bodies which shine in that vast expanse, visible to our eyes, though placed at an immeasurable distance, invite the mind above, to religious impressions, to solemn meditation. They affect and elevate the heart—they occupy the astonished soul, and fill it with just and cheering thoughts; with delicious hopes and clearer perceptions of another world.

While this spectacle is before us, let the righteous rejoice in the splendour which belongs to the author of their being, and bearing in mind his holiness, return their warmest thanks for all that he has granted to comfort them in their passage through life, and for all his perfections and attributes. Give not all your time to confession and prayer, though these are not to be omitted, but apply yourselves to the angelic exercise of praise. Let us bear about with us constantly a heart overflowing with love and gratitude, warm from the recollection of his bounty, and elevated by the contemplation of his glory. Surely there are sufficient rays of light constantly emanating from the great author of all, to kindle in us a holy flame. Let us then again and again survey the mighty work of our celestial Parent; and may we be so deeply impressed with it, as to be able to describe it in appropriate terms, to our less observant brethren, that they, moved by our representation, and stimulated by our example, may, with unaffected devotion, join with us to honour the good Supreme. Grant, O Lord, that the sacred flame now kindled in our bosoms may never fail—and that we still, fondly cherishing it ourselves, may be never weary of imparting it to others.

Every glance that we direct to heaven on a star-light night, tends to favour and create pious inspirations, and to encourage and carry out holy purposes. It stills the tumult in our troubled minds, which the cares and the disappointments of the day may have caused, and gives us confidence in that Almighty being, by whose fiat worlds revolve; by whose command, all things in heaven above, or on the earth below, are governed, arranged, and sustained. He is every where, and through all things his power is felt.

The stillness which prevails—the sacred calm, the gentle light emitted from above, is most salutary in its effects; is most refreshing to the soul. We glow with hope, while we commend ourselves

to him, of whose greatness the starry heavens give undoubted testimony to our wondering and delighted eyes. At such a season, and under such circumstances, we bend with a more perfect submission to his will. Then is the reflection forced upon our souls, that all the celestial bodies floating in immeasurable space, do not turn aside from the orbit in which they were appointed to move, being controlled and guided by the will of the Almighty. To these reflections, edifying on many points, we will frequently recur. Again and again will we renew them, when the stars of heaven, in unchangeable lustre, appear before us. So shall our evenings, passed in rational devotion, be always happy, our rest will be sweet, and we shall awake with cheerful thankfulness to hail a new day. Many of our days would pass away unimproved, our souls unoccupied by a thought of God, or meditation in things divine, did not evening extricate us from the cares and toils of earth, to conduct us to the path which leads to heaven. It is then that we can explore the depths of our hearts; while looking up to the spangled sky, we more acutely feel that we live in the sight of him who is the universal judge of all the world. Welcome then, thy solemn stillness, and thy tranquil glory, bright silent night! Thou preparest peace for the anxious bosom. Be it thine to lead our thoughts to God, and to reveal to us all that is lurking in our minds, and rescue us from the delusion of the world, that we may work out our salvation—with fear and trembling, but still with holy confidence in the ultimate result.

## GOD'S MAGNIFICENCE AND POWER.

That the stars appear like so many diminutives, and scarce distinguishable points, is owing to their immense and inconceivable distance. Immense and inconceivable indeed it is; since a ball shot from the loaded cannon, and flying with unabated rapidity, must travel at this impetuous rate almost seven hundred thousand years, before it could reach the nearest of those twinkling luminaries.

Can anything be more wonderful than these observations? Yes; there are truths far more stupendous, there are scenes far more extensive. As there is no end of the Almighty Maker's greatness; so no imagination can set limits to his creating hand.—Could you soar beyond the moon, and pass through all the planetary choir; could you wing your way to the highest apparent star, and take your stand on one of those loftiest pinnacles of heaven; you would there see other skies expanded; another sun distributing his inexhaustible beams by day; other stars, that gild the horrors of the alternate night; and other, perhaps nobler systems, established, is unknown profusion, through the boundless dimensions of space. Nor does the dominion of the universal Sovereign terminate there. Even at the end of this vast tour, you would find yourself advanced no farther than the

suburbs of creation; arrived only at the frontiers of the great

Jehovah's kingdom.

And do they tell me, that the sun, the moon, and all the planets, are but a little part of his works? How great then are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! And if so, what is the Creator himself! How far exalted above all praise! Who is so high, that He looks down on the highest of these dazzling spheres, and sees even the summit of creation in a vale: so great, that this prodigious extent of space is but a point in his presence; and all this confluence of worlds as the lightest atom that fluctuates in air, and sports in the meridian ray!

Thou most sublime and incomprehensibly glorious God, how am I overwhelmed with awe! how sunk into the lowest prostration of mind! when I consider thy "excellent great-

ness." and my own utter insignificancy?

Hervey.

## MORNING.—MARCH 25.

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, Born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us Let us find our rest in Thee! Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
Born a Child, and yet a King;
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring!
By Thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne!

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

THE COMING OF THE SAVIOUR ANNOUNCED. LUKE I.

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women

29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man:

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Chost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest

shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

## IMPORTANT COMMISSIONS ASSIGNED TO CHRISTIANS IN THIS WORLD.

Solemn associations are bound up with this day, called in many countries that of "Our Lady," It was on this day that the great announcement to the mother of Jesus was made of her future happiness. "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." While the day reminds us of the election made of the blessed Virgin, who was subsequently to bring Christ our Saviour into the world, let us make a pious use of it, and reflect in profound devotion on the all-important event. Let it occupy our thoughts, and let us bless the Lord. Does the question suggest itself, why was Mary selected to be the blessed among women? why was she, a maiden of Judea, chosen to be the mother of the Eternal Being, coming to the house of Jacob: of him who was to be dignified with the glorious title of the Son of God? The question, like many others, that might be propounded on matters so far removed from human proof, can only receive this answer-" Because such was the will of God." The motives of the Eternal are not always to be penetrated by human discernment, but he who has given us, with a thinking spirit, a desire to comprehend the reasons which in fluence his government, since the holy scripture does not reprove this desire, we may be permitted to reiterate the inquiry, as, by pursuing it, we may better understand the ways of our eternal father, and advance the welfare of our souls, by confirming our faith.

We find that the Deity had chosen Mary to be the mother of the Redeemer, because she was a handmaid of the Lord, a spotless and highly favoured woman, by nature; and therefore, especially fitted to fulfil the high vocation assigned to her. It is thus that we may account for the glorious distinction which she received; and thus, those who are devoted to the father, with true fear and sincere love, will find favour with, and frequently be called to an important post, by the Lord. The diffident, unassuming Christian, may oftenfeel embarrassed at the greatness of the charge assigned to him, at the language of the messenger sent to him, and at the nature of the commission he is called to execute.

Great, indeed, was the honour conferred on

the Holy Mary. The world was at that period in awful spiritual darkness. From the almost universal spread of idolatry, men had taken up the most unworthy ideas of God, and of religion, and the wild ideas which had obtained among them, of a future state, were so incoherent and strange, that an instructor to correct these gross and dangerous errors, was imperatively called for. There had long been current a prophecy, that a great reformer should come to elevate the human race; the Messiah was expected, and the great prediction was realised in Christ. It was his to mediate between man and God. Supernatural signs proved that he was really what he declared himself to be. To his followers, Moses and Elias appeared, conversing with Jesus; at his death, all nature was shaken to its foundation, the vail of the temple was rent, and the graves gave up their dead. Subsequently, he himself rose from the tomb-was recognised by many: men and angels attested his glory. Such was he, whom the "blessed among women" was to call her son.

Though no charge so great as this may now be vouchsafed, the faithful worshipper of the Almighty will, while on earth, be entrusted with great things. He will, from his example, have a powerful influence on the love and faith of those before whom he walks, and with whom he associates. With the blessing of God, on him will devolve the not inglorious task of educating and forming philanthropists, children of God, and citizens of heaven; as Mary educated and formed the habits of her divine offspring. Let gratified love and ambition rejoice in the thought. Like the pious Virgin, of whose high calling we are reminded by this day, we will be resigned to the will of our Lord, with devout submission, and strive for that favour which we are taught to expect will be its bright reward. It is for us to endeavour to obtain that commanding and useful influence over our connexions, the members of our families, and of our friends generally, that may benefit them, by guiding them into the paths of truth, godliness, and virtue. We will direct them towards heaven, while promoting their happiness in the world. So shall we ensure eternal bliss for ourselves. Strengthen and animate us. Oh Father, with thy merciful assistance, to enable us zealously to follow up, and successfully to accomplish, the task we thus propose to undertake, and grant that the result may contribute to the happiness of our earthly brethren, and to thy undying glory.

FORMER STATE OF THE WORLD AS TO IDOLATRY.

It is remarkable that those very states which were most celebrated for their great superiority in the arts and sciences, were the least celebrated for great virtues. The Athenians, by far the most eminent, for the ardent admiration, diligent pursuit, and great reputation of arts and philosophy, were also the most distinguished for their monstrous ingratitude and cruelty to their best benefactors—the levity with which they transferred their affections from one political leader to another-and their factions, and feuds, and venality, which were almost universal; nor have we any reason to believe that the social virtues flourished more than the public virtues amongst this refined and recondite people. It is true that Athens gave birth to a Socrates, but that pious sage was allowed to be the subject of ludicrous merriment, the sport of a wanton stage harlequin, and finally to endure, though perfectly and palpably innocent, violent death at the hands of her citizens. So great was their superstition that they worshipped more gods than all Greece beside-a fact facetiously expressed by the satirist when he said, "In Athens it is easier to find a god than a man:" it being computed that they had at least 30,000 idols or divinities. Let us trace the history of this celebrated city from the time she could number amongst her citizens a Sophocles, an Herodotus, a Plato, and a Demosthenes, to the period when she was visited by the great apostle, and we shall find that whilst she continued the seat and resort of learning, she equally continued to be distinguished as the most luxurious, base, servile, and besotted people under heaven-that she was throughout precisely the same, intellectually and morally, as when she so violently shocked the feelings and principles of that venerable apostle -a people the most inquisitive, and at the same time wholly given up to idolatry and abominations.

Dr. Edwards.

## E V E N I N G.—M A R C H $\,$ 25.

THE AGED CHRISTIAN'S SOLACE.

Though my youth hath fled by like a dream of the night,
Whose beauty may greet me no more;
The heart that has sought for its Maker aright,

Finds little in age to deplore!

The seasons may change, and the spring-tide decay,
And the storms of the winter may rage;
But the hand that hath saved me through many a day

Is the hand to console me in age.

Though my youth had fled by, still there aves in my breast

A feeling which time can outlast;

As the sunset sheds beauty long, long in the west, When the prime of his glory is past.

Oh, bless'd be the time I selected those flowers, Which a future of love might presage;

For the feelings then cherish d now hallow the hours That bring blessing and joy to my age

And at last, when the steps of my life totter slow,
May my heart nature's warning receive;
And calm and resigned to its destiny go,
Nor sigh for the world it must leave

But with faith in the promise of *Him* who hath said "Thy frailties on earth be forgiven,"

May my spirit yet trust, through that hope of the dead, To meet with its loved ones in heaven!

Swain.

TO LOVE HIS NEIGHBOUR THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY. ROM. XIII.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he

that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love

is the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the

armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness not in strife and envying.

## WE SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S BLESSINGS TO OTHERS, AS WELL AS OURSELVES.

"O Lord, thy loving kindness is before mine eyes." Great is the mercy of the Omnipotent; and countless the evils which our own levity and proneness to sin, would have brought upon us, left wholly to ourselves. From these we are happily saved; they have been averted by his goodness. Blessings have descended upon us for which we have not laboured, and which we could not expect. Thy goodness, O Lord! has been wholly unassisted by us, and with all thankfulness we acknowledge thy loving kindness is before our eyes, in each succeeding day. Thy goodness has bestowed upon us endowments which some of our fellow-creatures do not possess. We are in easy circumstances, while many have to struggle under severe privations. Moreover,-we avow it with joy and inward satisfaction—our hearts are armed with faith in thy good providence, and fortified with convictions which are the surest defences against the cares of life, and which, under any reverses, will protect us from despair, and from such extremity of misery as less favoured mortals too frequently experience. How great, how valuable are blessings like these, which it has been our happiness to receive from the hand of God. Wholly unworthy should we be to continue in the enjoyment of them, if we did not ceaselessly acknowledge them with elevated minds, and hearts glowing with sincere gratitude.

Cheered by unequivocal proofs of loving-kindness, most exhilarating is the reflection that we

are so dealt with by that Omnipotent power which first bade us see the light. To be beloved and protected by him, is happiness indeed; for we know his love will be constant; he will never leave us, nor forsake us; he will never abandon those he has owned as his children, and who earnestly desire to know his ways, and to do his will.

The most worthy offering we can make to our gracious Lord, for benefits so vast, is willing obedience to his commands. This is the way in which men should evince their love of God. We must apply ourselves to remember all his ordinances; and it will not be difficult, if we are what we profess to be, animated by gratitude, and warmed by reverential love. Had we always felt thus, how many evils which we have known, would have been happily avoided! how much grief and anguish should we have escaped, and how much more fruitful of true felicity would life have been! Alas! his loving kindness has not always been before our eyes, and those feelings of devout gratitude which ought to know no pause, have not always been present to our souls. Because our hopes of worldly advancement have not been realised, we have weakly repined; we have doubted the justice of that decree under which we have encountered severe tribu-And such has been, unhappily, our impression, notwithstanding it was proved to us by our own experience, that often, in withholding what we most eagerly craved, God, in his goodness, had granted us his blessing, and saved us from affliction which we should have found it. hard indeed to endure. To him we owe it, that our way through life has been brightened with many happy moments, which we neither deserved for our industry, or, for our obedience to the will of our Eternal Parent. Still, on looking back, the retrospect offers so many instances of heavenly favour and paternal care, we can do no less than confess, with deep emotion, that we are wholly unworthy of the mercies we have received.

Now, awaking to reason, and to a sense of duty, let us no more risk being confounded with the mean votaries of pleasure, whose only care it is to "eat and drink to-day." Our hopes must not thus deplorably grovel on the earth; they should rather soar to that heaven on which our Saviour's contemplation, while here, enthralled in the flesh, were incessantly fixed. To him the invisible world was a reality. His mind could not be withdrawn from it, and immortality was as distinctly before his vision, while here, as the mountains of

Judea. Christians ought to look beyond the scenes acting on this temporary stage. We must not be of the world, though we are in it; but it must be our endeavour to imbibe the spirit of Christ, satisfied that, unless we do so, we can be none of his.

Not only in ourselves do we mark traces of his pity for weak mortals. He has not left himself without witnesses, and in the career of many of our brethren, we discover blessed evidences of divine mercy. How many of our beloved fellow-creatures has he graciously snatched from peril, and redeemed! how many, once depressed by overwhelming terror, has he been pleased to rejoice and bless! Still, Oh God! let thy loving-kindness be before their eyes, and let the incense of their pious gratitude rise an acceptable offering to thee!

To us, deign still to afford thy countenance and support. Should sorrow again overtake us, grant that we may find consolation from looking at the happiness of those we love. May we, seeking to promote the welfare of our brethren, find joy within ourselves, and feel incessantly impelled to mark, and exult in the proofs of thy loving-kindness! Pitying those who mourn, and anxious, if possible, to relieve their woe, we will rejoice with those that rejoice. They are our brethren, the children of the same Almighty Father, and their happiness no feeling of jealousy or envy shall prevent us from regarding as in some degree our own.

## GOD'S POWER AND PROVIDENCE.

When, in some of the high southern latitudes, and in a dark tempestuous night, a flash of lightning discovered to Captain Cook a vessel, which glanced along close by his side, and which but for the lightning he must have run foul of, both the danger and the transient light that shewed it were undoubtedly designed to convey to him this wholesome in-struction, that a particular Providence attended him, and that he was not only preserved from evils of which he had notice, but from many more of which he had no information, or even the least suspicion. tion, or even the least suspicion. What unlikely contingencies may nevertheless take place! How improbable that two ships should dash against each other, in the midst of the vast Pacific Ocean, and that, steering contrary courses from parts of the world so immensely distant from each other, they should yet move so exactly in a line as to clash, fill, and go to the bottom, in a sea, where all the ships in the world might be so dispersed as that none should see another! Yet this must have happened but for the remarkable interference which he has recorded. The same Providence indeed might as easily have conducted them so wide of each other that they should never have met at all, but then this lesson would have been lost; at least, the heroic voyager would have encompassed the globe, without having had occasion to relate an incident that so naturally suggests it. Cowper's Letters.

## MORNING.-MARCH 26.

SIN ONLY SUBDUED BY THE SAVIOUR.

Where'er I turn my eyes within, What loads of guilt, what depths of sin, Like oceans deep, like mountains high, Call for the vengeance of the sky!

Deceit, ambition, lust, and pride, Within the human heart reside; There Satan, seated on his throne, Claims the whole empire as his own.

But Jesus comes! the mighty Lord! He wields the bright celestial sword; The strong man arm'd is forc'd to fly, Whilst angels chaunt the victory.

Glory to God in heaven above, On earth sweet peace and sacred love; Good will to men—the foe is foil'd, And God and sinners reconcil'd.

Come, mighty conqueror of the heart, Subdue my soul in ev'ry part; Ascend thy long-usurped throne, Be thou my king, and thou alone.

Christian Retirement.

CHRISTIANS SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER. ROMANS XV.

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Jesus Christ.

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST TO BE CONSTANTLY REMEMBERED AND IMITATED.

We are cautioned in the scripture against identifying ourselves too intimately with the world. We are exhorted not to be like it, not to speak its language, not to do its works; and especially, to avoid its follies, and its sinful excesses. A spirit very different from that which generally prevails in the world, ought to animate the Christian; and meanness, hyprocisy, and avarice, he should learn to put far away, the spirit of faith and love he must invoke, and give up inordinate longings

after worldly distinctions, and sensual pleasures. He must despise pomp and luxury, and seek for nobler, better enjoyments; which, rich and refined in themselves, have no bitter regret-no heartburning remorse, in their train. To the searcher of all hearts, we must appeal, whether the true spirit of Christ is in us, and whether, as becomes rational beings, we can heartily and sincerely say, we love the truth. It is of no small importance that we should rightly understand, whence we come, and whither we go. To know our destiny -to know that salvation is ours, and that interposing mercy has enabled us to escape eternal misery, is beyond all doubt among the most sacred and exciting themes that can occupy our thoughts. Let these command our best attention, and be ever near our hearts, so that we may be incessantly anxious to know in whom we believe, and whether we stand fast in the faith, advance, or retrograde.

But it is not enough that faith is ours. The faith that is in us must shew itself outwardly in our works, in works of love and charity, of holiness and self-denial. It must be proved that our love consists not merely of words; it must be shewn that we abhor deceit. Let our hearts be, from time to time, carefully self-explored, that we may know whether, having Christ in our view, they have been ennobled and purified. Do we feel that kindly spirit in our bosoms, that would make us content, were it necessary, to lay down our lives for our brethren? Do we feel so cured of selfishness, that we never seek our own happiness alone; and are we prepared to endure all things in the cause of righteousuess? So we can be assured that we have this—that the spirit of Christ is in us, true substantial lasting joy, the joy of the Lord will animate our souls, and it will be our greatest delight to honour God, and to contribute to the well-being of our fellow creatures; and thus evince our eagerness to do his will. We shall then find richest pleasure in contemplating the works of our Creator, in obeying his decrees, and in seeking to live in communion with him. Be the dispensations of Providence what they may, we must be satisfied with our lot, not lamenting that we cannot boast of a greater share of happiness. The mind thus disciplined, we shall enter with cheerfulness on the work of each succeeding morrow. which God has assigned to him, the true Christian will rejoice faithfully to perform.

To make himself what he ought to become, let

the pilgrim in life's road steadfastly fix his eyes on that Saviour he aspires to follow. The fine qualities by which his progress was illustrated. like the loveliness of nature, never ceases to charm the eye. Kings and heroes who are known to fame have occasionally performed grand actions. which an admiring posterity might desire to imitate. These, too, have generally been associated with triumphs of war, marked by devastation, rapine, and bloodshed. Not such, the glory of our Redeemer's earthly life; it was one stream of gentleness, and exalted humanity, shedding its mild light on all around,-submission to the will of heaven, forbearance towards scornful and persecuting man, mark every page of his wondrous story. Who, like Jesus, has placed before our eyes such a sublime union of devotion, courage, shrewdness, generosity, and mercy. The follower of Christ is hence taught to bear and to forbear; to give up mean resentments, but to remember and requite kindness; and he is anxious to do good, without looking for applause or recompense. Such ought to be the fruits of a careful study of the character of our Lord.

If, till now, that spirit of Christ was not alive in us, if we have too generally conformed to the usages of the world, let us be thankful that we still survive, and may live to amendment. That must be our study; our great care how to secure our salvation, and guard our souls against being seduced to wander by the cheating and unsubstantial pleasures of the world. How can this be done? how can we avoid the soul-jeopardising peril, if our anxiety and vigilance be suffered to abate? Protect us, O Lord, against such weakness —let the graces and the power of thy Holy Spirit prove far, far more mighty than the depravity of our hearts, and the enticements of vanity. Give of this world's goods what may tend to our real comfort, not what may administer to our pride. So our souls are safe, all thy dispensations will be regarded as works of thy love; suffering will prove beneficial, and death felicity. Cheered by this persuasion, we shall thankfully enjoy the blessings placed within our reach, and even when their evanescence is most painfully experienced, the heart, sensible of the mercy reserved for the true worshippers of the great Author of the universe, will be consoled by the higher prizes in that eternal home, which sacred hope will not fail to present to the eye of faith.

## ALL BELONGS TO GOD.

A creature, meriting of the Creator, is an impossibility. When the archangel, can merit, the worm, may merit. And he, alone, who is independent,—he, who has received nothing,—he, who is every thing to himself, as well as every thing to the universe,—his own fountain of existence,—his own storehouse of happiness,—his own harvest of glory,—God, alone, can merit, and, therefore, God, alone, could redeem.

We have now, only, in conclusion, to ask, Whether you will keep back from God, what, is, strictly, his own? Will ye rob God, and pawn his time, and his talents, and his strength with the world? Will ye refuse him, what, though it cannot be given, with merit, cannot be denied, without ruin? He asks your heart-give it him-it is his own. He asks your intellect-give it himit is his own. He asks your money—give it him—it is his own. Remember the words of the Apostle, "Ye are not your own: ye are bought with a price." Ye are not your own. Ye are bought, even, if you perish. Your bodies, are not your own, though you may enslave them to lust; they are God's, to be thrown to the rack. Your souls, are not your own, though you may hide, and tarnish, and degrade their immortality; they are God's, to be chained down to the rock, that the waves of wrath, may dash, and break over them. Oh, we want you; nay, the spirits of the just, want you; and the holy angels, want you; and the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, want you; all, but, the devil, and ruined souls, want you, to leave off defrauding the Almighty, and to give him his own-yourselves: his by creation; his, doubly, by redemption. I must give God the body, I must give God the soul. I give him the body, if I clothe the tongue with his praises-if I yield not my members, as instruments of unrighteousness-if I suffer not, the fires of unhallowed passion, to light up mine eye, nor, the vampyre of envy, to suck the colour from my cheek—if I profane not my hands, with the gains of ungodliness; if I turn away mine ear from the scoffer, and keep under every appetite, and wrestle with every lust; making it palpable, that I consider each limb, as not destined to corruption, but, intended for illustrious service, when, at the trumpet-blast of the resurrection, the earth's sepulchre, shall be riven. And I give God the soul, when the understanding, is, reverently, turned on the investigations of celestial truth; when the will, is reduced to meek compliance, with the Divine will; and when all the affections, move, so harmoniously, with the Lord's, that they fasten on the objects, which occupy his. This, it is, to give God his own. O God! "all things, come of thee.'

Rev. Henry Melvitte.

## EVENING .-- MARCH 26.

GOD'S PROMISE PLEADS.

I will plead thy promise, Lord, I will trust thy faithful word; Eince this precious truth I see, "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Oft I feel an evil heart, Prone to wander and depart; But thy word still speaks to me, "As thy days, thy strength shall be." Satan with his crafty wile, Seeks to fill my heart with guile; Yet the promise says to me, "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

In whatever strait I come, While I journey to my home, This shall be my stay and plea; "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Christian Retirement.

## JESUS SENDING FORTH HIS DISCIPLES. MARK VI.

2 And when the Sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 ¶ And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:

9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

## THE HAPPINESS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

Man is favoured in this, that the light of the Almighty has shone upon him. He is endowed with reason to regulate his actions. To us, God has given that noble gift, and hence it is that we enjoy the unspeakable advantage of being enabled to raise our thoughts to him. The richness of the blessings which we enjoy, deserve our sincerest gratitude. These enable us, in some degree, to comprehend his greatness. We are capable of forming ideas of what we see, we can recal, and record the past, and review the series of useful actions, which, by the favour of the Almighty, we may have performed, and we can, in like manner, keep in our recollection, the series of blessings for which we have to be grateful; but more

than all, for the promises given to us, we are capable of looking forward to, and of enjoying, by anticipation, the glory which the Lord of all reserves for us in the world to come.

Oh, that we may make a proper use of the light that shines within us, and so preserve the exercise of our reason, as to live in purity and truth! Oh, that turning our eyes inwardly, we could discern no reason to blush for our thoughts; that they were directed to evil things, and had perversely and perseveringly turned away from holiness and heaven. Would, that on examining our hearts, we could find all there so correct, that we might confidently look forward to the future,

without apprehension.

How weak, how foolish, is the sinner. Even on earth, the reward of virtue is not small. Rich and pure is that exaltation with which a benevolent heart swells, when some important undertaking is brought to completion in which suffering humanity is largely interested. Contrast the happiness which such a benefactor to his race, realises, with the coarse joys, followed by shame, regret, and misery, of the sensualist. How enviable is the condition of the former; how deplorable the fate of the latter! The good man has gained a victory, which does not merely exalt his name, but one in which a grateful world will rejoice, and still more, one which his conscience whispers an all-seeing Deity, from his throne above, will approve. How blessed is he, whatever the transient cares and sufferings which may attend him here, if like the apostle he can exclaim -"I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth, these is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me."

The faithful and sincere Christian, will not be led into error by the light which shines within. It will never cause him to reproach himself immoderately for the past, nor threaten to conduct him to eternal misery. But at this silent hour, so fitted for important meditation, let us seriously put the question to ourselves, are we the characters we have supposed? are we what Christians ought to be? Have we duly applied ourselves to tread in the footsteps of our Lord? Have we been careful that our thoughts and actions should be guided by his Holy Spirit? Would that it were so! Then should we find that all our aspirings had been towards that which was truly noble and good. Can that Omniscient Being, who sees all hearts, look with pleasure on us, unless

our wishes have been as they ought to have been directed towards him? Unhappily, to these interrogatories, we must reply, that our thoughts were habitually given to the world. Wedded to its lusts, they were stained and contaminated by all the vile impurity, that can enter a weak and sinful imagination.

It is even so. Little use have we made of the light granted to us by our Maker, on which we can reflect with comfort and satisfaction. Deep shame ought to come over us when we think what we are, and what we might have been. Vain and foolish, as our ideas have proved themselves, they were a sedition against God—a rejection of those principles by which the Christian should feel himself bound, and by which his actions, and all his feelings, ought to be governed and regulated.

Henceforth, may it be otherwise. In the stillness of evening, we will exercise our minds in pious efforts, to render ourselves more acceptable in the sight of God. To him our solemn reflections shall be consecrated. Thus occupying ourselves, refreshing rest, and tranquil thoughts, will be ours, and the happy spirit will wake to a new day, as to a new existence, with thankfulness, joy, and pious hope.

## HUMAN REASON OF LITTLE AVAIL IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

Angels descend from heaven to publish peace between man and his Maker-the Prince of Peace himself comes to confirm and establish it, and war, hatred and desolation, are the consequence. Thousands quarrel about the interpretation of a book which none of them understand. He that is slain dies firmly persuaded that the crown of martyrdom expects him, and he that slew him is equally convinced that he has done God service. In reality, they are both mistaken, and equally unentitled to the honour they arrogate to themselves. If a multitude of blind men should set out for a certain city, and dispute about the right road till a battle ensued between them, the probable effect would be, that none of them would ever reach it; and such a fray, preposterous and shocking in the extreme, would exhibit a picture in some degree resembling the original of which we have been speaking. And why is not the world thus occupied at present? Even because they have exchanged a zeal that was no better than madness for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The Holy Sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations called Christian, not because the light of true wisdom has delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world. The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding; but, together with the delusion, they have lost the substance, and, for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here then we see the ne plus ultra of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non-essentials, but, with respect to that in which the essens



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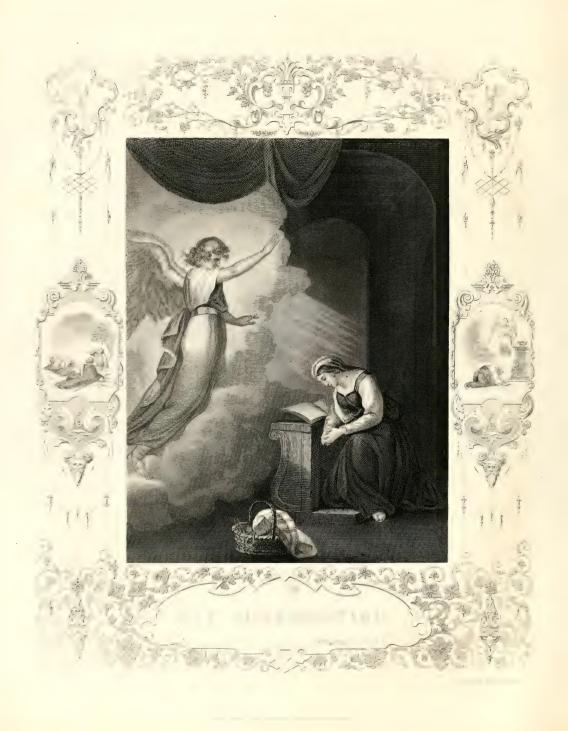
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Give up to love thy willing heart;
No fondest parent's tender breast
Yearns like thy God's to make thee bissal!"

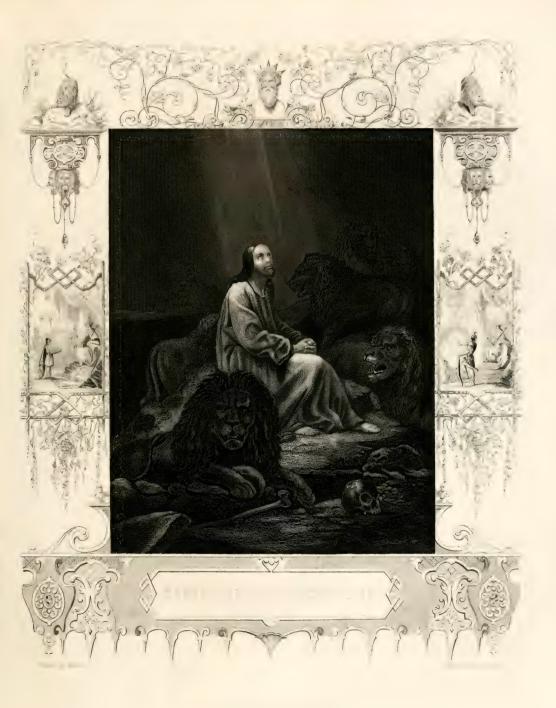
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of Christianity consists, leaves it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors that in different ages have disgraced the faith, but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion.

\*Cowper's Letters.

## MORNING.—MARCH 27.

JOY NOT UNBECOMING THE CHRISTIAN.

Though solemn thoughts his time employ, The Christian need not fly from joy; All peace within, and sweet content, To serve God is no punishment.

The dawning day, the opening flowers, Spring's zephyrs, summer's smiling hours, Should tend to make his heart elate— Gifts of a Being good as great.

Then let not men suppose they owe To God a daily strain of woe; Nor deem the howlings of despair Are piety, though shaped as prayer.

Anon

COMFORT FOR GOD'S PEOPLE. LUKE I.

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,
74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered
out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without
fear.

## FIRMNESS AND COURAGE ENJOINED.

To behave like men, to be strong, is one of the exhortations which are addressed to us in scrip-Highly necessary it is that we should be prepared to act our part manfully in this life, for amidst its strife, its burthens, and its embarrassments, there is much that may try the courage of the sojourner, and, if he be disposed to yield to weak misgivings, to overwhelm him with dismay. Awake to our duty, we summon up our resolution to act our part with becoming determination. But whence shall we derive the fortitude which is requisite to the able performance of our part? Religious patience, and resignation to the will of God, are the sources from which the Christian must obtain support. The courage which can meet difficulties and dangers with

superior force, must spring from a good conscience. "I am afraid, but I do not despair," is the language of that Christian who has succeeded in placing himself in such a position. With that he can never be confounded. He trusts in the Lord, uses his best exertions to do good, and honestly labours for his bread. The pressure of terrifying thoughts, and depressing anticipations, do not move him from the faith he feels in the proved wisdom and bounty of Providence. By recollections of the great Propitiator at Golgotha, his heart is filled with sincere love for those whom God has given to him, that he may promote their improvement and happiness. The love which he feels, inspires him with strength, and enables him to preserve his serenity, under the pressure of distress; it subdues every alarm that might otherwise abate his firmness.

The Christian soldier takes the field with a calmness which the rude brawler who affects to laugh at death, can never know. He may be persuaded that his end is nigh; but he is prepared to meet his fate. In those moments when compelled to separate himself from the beings who, of all that exist on earth, are dearest to him, he is still above yielding to grief. And why? Because he has in his mind the settled conviction, that if in this world they are to meet no more, still they will not be lost to him. He looks beyond the grave, and views death but as an incident of moderate importance. "If," he joyously reflects, "we must be separated, praised be God! we still

have an eternity to spend together."

No phantom of the imagination can frighten the soul of the true disciple of Jesus Christ. He knows how to preserve and to use the light that is within him, and does not give way to wildly disordered thoughts; does not sink beneath the dread of future sufferings, but, master of himself, he knows how to control his most annoying cares, when they seem likely to become too strong for him. His faith enables him to oppose them with cheerfulness, and to rely with satisfied confidence in God. Alarmed he may be, but he will never Though dangers surround him on every despair. side, still the Christian warrior is undaunted. His spirit rises in proportion to the difficulties with which he has to contend; he meets them with composure; he increases his efforts to conquer them; and he prays for aid from him who has promised to his faithful servants, that he will never leave them nor forsake them.

In the ordinary walks of life, he strives, by

honest conduct in all his dealings, to secure a good conscience, being well aware that that will prove his best stay in the hour of peril.

Great Lord of all! awake to these important considerations, with thy blessed assistance, we will guard with all possible vigilance against throwing away this shield of defence. Suffer us not to wander from the path of righteousness, to be entangled in the snares of infidelity, lest we sink in imbecility to despair. Give us manly energy to struggle with the sorrows of life. On our part we will not forget how gloriously our God leads those who are truly his, and how often even ourselves have been snatched, by thy hand, from startling danger and bitter anguish. Devotion shall occupy our whole souls. Unceasingly, our prayers shall ascend to thy throne; we will labour without intermission to do good, and never grow weary in the cause. Again we implore thy aid, Oh gracious Father! Sustain our resolution, despite of all temptations that may assail, and enable us to avoid error, and to repel sin, that we may fearlessly seek the road of truth and perfection, and confiding in a merciful Redeemer. preserve the courage of our life in death.

## CHRISTIAN VALOUR.

He continued all night under arms, wrapped up in his cloak, and generally sheltered under a rick of barley which happened to be in the field. About three in the morning he called his domestic servants to him, of which there were four in waiting. He dismissed three of them, with a most affectionate Christian advice, and such solemn charges, relating to the performance of their duty and the care of their souls, as seemed plainly to intimate, that he apprehended it at least very probable he was taking his last farewell of them. There is great reason to believe, that he spent the little remainder of the time, which could not be much above an hour, in those devout exercises of soul which had so long been habitual to him, and to which so many circumstances did then concur to call him. The army was alarmed at break of day, by the noise of the rebels' approach, and the attack was made before sun-rise, yet when it was light enough to discern what passed. As soon as the enemy came within gun-shot, they made a furious fire; and it is said that the dragoons, which constituted the left wing, immediately fled. The colonel, at the beginning of the onset, which in the whole lasted but a few minutes, received a wound by a bullet in his left breast, which made him give a sudden spring in his saddle; upon which his servant, who had led the horse, would have persuaded him to retreat; but he said it was only a wound in the flesh, and fought on, though he presently after received a shot in his right thigh. In the mean time, it was discerned that some of the enemies fell by him, and particularly one man who had made him a treacherous visit but a few days before, with great professions of zeal for the present establishment.

Life of Colonel Gardiner.

## EVENING, MARCH 27.

## EFFICACY OF REPENTANCE.

By the red lightning rent and riven,
And stretch'd along the plzin,
Can the tall oak extend to heaven
Its gay green boughs again?
Or when a star hath lost its track,
And faded from on high,
Can aught restore the lost one back
To glory and the sky?
No; the tall oak no more can spread
Its green leaves to the blast,
Nor can the meteor which hath fled,
Recall its splendours past.

Can man, deep sunk in guilty care,
And press'd by human ill,
Gain triumph o'er his dark despair,
And find a solace still?
Yes! He who for our ransom bled,
Holds back th' avenging rod,
When meek Contrition bows her head,
Repenting, to her God.
Though dark the sin—though deep the heart
Be sunk in guilt and pain,
Yet Mercy can a balm impart,
And raise it up again.

Mackay.

## WE MUST SEEK PEACE BY AMENDING OUR WAYS. JEREMIAH VII.

3 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these

5 For if ye throughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

## THE ABSENCE OF GREAT WORLDLY CRIMES NOT SUFFICIENT TO ENSURE SALVATION.

"God has blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that were against us, and taken them out of the way, nailing them to the cross." Thanks be to our merciful Father, for this instance of his grace, under which we are enabled, without agonising dread, to enter upon the night of the grave, with the same composure we experience while preparing for our ordinary repose at the close of this day. To thee also, sublime Redeemer of the world, Son of the Most High! our gratitude is due. Obedient to thy Eternal Father, even to

death on the cross, it was thine largely to assist, by thy merits and thy sufferings, in blotting out those ordinances which opposed man's salvation. Had they not been so blotted out, what, Great God! what would our situation have beenall our sins remaining on record against offending man, at the day of judgment! We tremble at the bare reflection, and we humble ourselves in tears and penitence at thy cross, Lord Jesus! Notwithstanding thy awful sacrifice, we dare not hope for mercy, if we do not receive thy law, We cannot reach heaven, unless we obey and endeavour to follow thee. Sad will be our condition when called to our final account, if we lose the precious hours of our lives by devoting them wholly to sensual pleasures, or worldly gains; if we suffer our attempts to purify our sin-polluted bosoms, that we may lead a better life, to know abatement. We must muster all our reason, all our strength, to resist the power of temptation, nor let our traitor passions and impure propensities hurry us into the paths of hell. To cultivate a zeal for the performance of our duty, must be our constant endeavour. Such a resolution it was that enabled the Saviour to commit his spirit, with cheerful confidence, into the hands of God. Oh! that we could imitate him whose life was wholly devoted to duty, and whose conversation was in heaven! Thou, Jesus, wast accessible to the love of life, and the dread of death: for we read "thy soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" but still thy courage and firmness remained, when the hour of thy cruel, thy appalling suffering was at hand. Thy pure conscience could brave death, unmoved by the misgivings which mortals know, because thou knewest that dying would but restore thee to thy glorious

It is of the first importance that the great and glorious example set before us, should ever be present to our waking thoughts. We have not been drunkards, adulterers, or robbers. This, however, is but a negative merit, and is not sufficient to save us from the sinner's fate. For such offences, if we are free from them, we shall not be condemned; but if we have neglected and forgotten our God and our Saviour, if we have lost all sense of fear of the Almighty, and have omitted to offer up our prayers to him, and despised the blood of his Son, and all the vast and immortal blessings for which it was shed, for this we may be judged and condemned. All that we can plead on the score of virtue and good deeds.

will be of little avail. Self-interest prompted our best actions; the hope of honourable distinction among men, or the prospect of reward. Merits such as we can claim, placed against the transgressions of which we are conscious, must be found wanting in the balance. They will no more prove a perfect vindication for us, at the final audit before God, than the kindness of a man to his poor neighbours, would exonerate a party accused of high treason, to an earthly prince.

This is sufficiently clear, by our good works we cannot be saved. We will therefore regulate our conduct according to those instructions which we have received from the precepts and the example of our Saviour. We must not rely on the efficacy of our own righteousness, nor on the praise which our actions may elicit from men. On thy passion, on thy death we fix our eyes, we rest our every hope; depending on the promise, that all who have faith in thee, shall not perish, but shall inherit eternal life. Do we feel assured of this? Then we may be satisfied that no care can overwhelm us, no fear disturb our rest. Strengthened by cheerful and refreshing visions of the goodness of our God, to him we will resign ourselves with all humility, but still upborne by faith in the Almighty's goodness. That faith, however, can only live in a heart awake to piety, and faithful to Jesus. To the purification of our hearts, then, let our best attention be given; so shall every day bring us nearer to that state of perfection which ought to be the object of Christian ambition, and to which we are called by our Lord and Saviour.

COMMUNION WITH GOD TO BE SOUGHT IN THE WORLD.

St. Paul tells his Hebrew converts, "Ye are come (already come) to Mount Sion—to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant." When this is the case, as it surely was with them, or the Spirit of Truth had never spoken it, there is an end of the melancholy and dulness of life at once. You will not suspect me, my dear cousin, of a design to understand this passage literally. But this however it certainly means, that a lively faith is able to anticipate, in some measure, the joys of that heavenly society which the soul shall actually possess hereafter.

Since I have changed my situation, I have found still greater cause of thanksgiving to the Father of all Mercies. The family with whom I live are Christians, and it has pleased the Almighty to bring me to the knowledge of them, that I may want no means of improvement in that temper and conduct which he is pleased to require in all his servants.

My dear cousin, one half of the Christian world would call this madness, fanaticism, and folly: but are not these things warranted by the word of God, not only in the passages I have cited, but in many others? If we have no communion with God here, surely we can expect none hereafter. A faith that does not place our conversation in heaven; that does not warm the heart, and purify it too; that does not, in short, govern our thought, word, and deed, is no faith, nor will it obtain for us any spiritual blessing here or hereafter.

Cowper's Letters.

## MORNING.-MARCH 28.

COME! LIGHT FROM HEAVEN.

Eternal Spirit! source of light! Enliv'ning, consecrating fire, Descend, and with celestial heat Our dull, our frozen hearts inspire: Our souls refine, our dross consume! Come, condescending Spirit! come.

Whatever guilt and madness dare, We would not quench the heavenly fire; Our hearts as fuel we prepare, Though in the flame we should expire Our breasts expand to make thee room Come, purifying Spirit! come.

Let pure devotion's fervors rise! Let every pious passion glow! Oh, let the raptures of the skies Kindle in our cold hearts below! Come, condescending Spirit! come, And make our souls thy constant home.

Rippon's Collection.

THE SINCERE OF HEART, NOT THE MERE OBSERVERS OF SACRED FORMS, WILL BE SAVED. LUKE XI.

37 As he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter: but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without

make that which is within also?

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, oehold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him,

Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers

17 We unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the pro-

phets, and your fathers killed them.

43 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fitness: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchre-

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shee from the foundation of the world, may be required of this

51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

## PIOUS CONFIDENCE THE BEST SOURCE OF COMFORT IN THIS LIFE.

Though sorrowful, the apostle describes himself to be always rejoicing. It is not difficult to understand him. The happiness of the Christian is great indeed, though he should be compelled to pass his life with those who are doomed to ceaseless toil and severe privation. It is, however, too true, that many a man calls himself, and believes himself to be a Christian, who cannot comprehend this; but the real Christian fails not

to prove it from his own experience.

And what is the cause? It is simply this, that under the most difficult circumstances, the Spirit of Christ refreshes him, and gives peace to his soul; that peace which the world cannot impart, with the wisdom that leads him to fix his thoughts and desires on things above, and to lay up treasures in heaven. Doing that, he does not feel the misery which others have to deplore, when he is compelled to leave or be separated from the good things of this world, for they constitute not the source of his happiness, which is based on firmer ground; which indeed rests on the rock of the Saviour.

His visible property may vanish, but the wealth which he has within, cannot be taken away. The joyful support of a good conscience is his, and that of a firm exhilarating hope in the abounding goodness of the Father of all. Unspeakably great is that felicity which a sensible and loving heart knows, -a heart faithful to duty, and constantly labouring to render itself more perfect, that it may eventually be fitted to partake of eternal happiness. He who is the possessor of it, proceeds through the world like a hero, conquering and to conquer; from one victory to another; never weary in the good cause, and always anxious to penetrate more deeply into those important truths, the knowledge of which is essential to salvation.

As he proceeds, sublimer objects present themselves to his thoughts, and a longing for the perfect consummation of the task which he has to perform, takes possession of his soul. Self-denial is his study. He disregards earth-born pleasures, and is only solicitous to satisfy higher longings; and this feeling gives him strength to bear the burthens of life with greater courage and increasing strength. His belief that all things work together for good, to those that love God, cannot be shaken, and in that blessed conviction, even in sorrow, his soul rejoices. The pains, the withering cares that at times oppress, he regards as the cross placed upon him, and neither the disappointment of hope, nor the loss of wealth, nor even the prospect of instant death, can fill him with dismay.

It will be observed, the true and sincere Christian is here spoken of, not the presuming, unstable pretender to sanctity. There are not a few, who hypocritically assume the character, and very many have but a transient view of the importance of religion. All men, at times, have a solemn warning from within, that they are responsible beings, and will have to answer for their conduct in another place. They feel that something is indispensable to conciliate the mercy of the Eternal Judge. But still the warning voice, has not made a sufficient impression on them, to turn them from the evil of their ways. The gains of dishonesty they are slow to resign, and from sensual pleasures they cannot tear themselves. Placed in this situation, between God and Mammon, they attempt to make a compromise, by offering abundant homage to the former, without discontinuing their zealous devotion to the latter. Weak triflers !- they think the Eternal may be trifled with, and, in effect, say to him, "Only excuse us from charitable sacrifices, from denying ourselves the guilty pleasures that we covet, and we will bow most obsequiously at thy altar, and acknowledge thy greatness, and thy goodness. Ask not actions, and we will honour thee with words."

The rational and sincere believer will not attempt in this way to haggle with his Maker. He will desire to give up his whole heart, and all he possesses, without reserve, to God. Whatever evils may overtake him, he will strive to turn them to good. From earthly calamity, he will derive celestial comfort, and submit, with unaffected resignation, to the will of the Lord. He raises his thoughts to heaven, and seeks to enter into close communion with those who have completed their great task; and sharp as the pains

which assail him may prove, though sorrowful, he is still rejoicing; assured that all the Supreme Being decrees, must be for the best.

No more shall our labouring breasts be seriously disturbed by torturing cares for worldly goods, nor let their loss be deplored with childish grief. Though tribulation may overtake us, still let us not deem ourselves miserable, as forsaken and hated by our God. Our true, our inward happiness ought not to be interrupted by the cross, which, in his wisdom, the Lord may impose upon us; it will in the end be heightened by that which brings present disappointment and sorrow. Oh! may our souls continue to gain more and more assurance, that we are destined for a higher state of felicity than can be known in this abode of strife and sin. That, we ought to strive, with all our faculties, to gain. The satisfaction growing on the contemplation of these greater treasures, will gild with comfort our mortal life; will elevate and gladden our spirits, as we journey onward. We shall learn to modify our wishes, and to be content with what our Lord, in the plenitude of his wisdom, may see fit to grant for our solace. We shall not lose courage, even when our trials may prove most severe, for the fainting spirit will be strengthened by the view of eternal bliss beyond the grave. Thus fortified against evil, looking forward with hope to the close of our pilgrimage, we joyfully proceed, to find, at last, our best hopes realised in the world to come.

## DETERMINATION TO REFORM.

Would we but impose upon ourselves the task of mortifying a fresh lust, and conquering a vicious habit every year; even thus in a little time we might attain to perfection. But alas! we often take the direct course; and are generally more wary, more devout, more zealous to do well, and to avoid evil, when we first enter upon a religious life, than after we have spent some time in it. The fervour of our affection, which ought in reason to grow every day stronger and brighter, cools and goes out again; and we reckon it a great matter, if our zeal can be kept up to the same warmth, which we felt at its first kindling. We are too tender of our ease, and loth to put ourselves upon the stretch: whereas, would we but use a little severity, and submit to some violence at first, that trouble would quickly wear off; and all our progress in virtue be, not easy and tolerable only, but even a delight, and wonderful satisfaction to us.

'Tis hard, I own, to part with our old friends, and to unlearn habits to which we have been long accustomed: and harder yet it is, to enter into a formal war with our own inclinations; and obstinately deny what we eagerly desire. But if we do not conquer smaller difficulties, what will become of us, when assaulted by greater? If we do not resist our natural propensions at first, before inclination is strengthened by custom, the enemy will gather strength; every day's practice is a fresh reinforcement; and the longer the delay, the greater

will be the difficulty. O think of this in time, and consider the happy effects of an early and serious piety: what peace, what triumphs to ourselves; what joy to others, to God and Christ, to angels and good men you will certainly procure, by behaving yourselves gallantly in this spiritual warfare.

Thomas à Kempis.

## EVENING.-MARCH 28.

## CHRISTIAN RESIGNATION.

In cold misfortune's cheerless day,
When joy and peace and love depart,
When friends deceive, and hopes decay,
And sorrows press the heavy heart,
O Lord! Thou canst relief impart;
'Tis Thou canst cheer the wounded mind,
'Tis Thou canst heal affliction's smart;—
Teach us to pray, and be resigned.

And oh! should changeful fortune frown,
Or those we love prove true uo more,
Should Death's relentless hand strike down
Those who return'd the love we bore;
Still let us worship and adore,
And seek the peace we yet may find;
Teach us, O Father! we implore,
To trust in Thee, and be resigned

Mackuy.

## THE HUMBLE SHALL BE EXALTED. LUKE XIV.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were hidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than

thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and

ne that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed,

the lame, the blind.

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of

the just.

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

TO DO GOOD, AND TO SERVE OTHERS, THE NOBLEST
OBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN AMBITION.

To to do good to others—to do as you would be done by, is the great rule by which the Christian who aspires to heaven should regulate his conduct. This was well understood by the disciple. "I have made myself servant to all," said the apostle Paul. Would that we could, every evening, say the same thing, from the consciousness of having, during the day, exerted ourselves to serve our fellow-creatures, and of having deemed no labour too humiliating, nor too severe to be endured in their cause. Were this so, it might be desirable that, for their sakes, our lives should be prolonged. If, however, the day of our departure should be seen rapidly to approach, we ought not to be sad in death. There is nothing that ought to terrify a faithful servant of the Lord: for he who has made a wise use of time, by exerting himself as a benefactor to mankind, has enjoyed a lengthened life, though he may be numbered with the dead, ere he reaches old age. In such a case, his thought must be, "It is the Lord that calls me away;" he cannot do wrong. Why should I complain that I am removed?

It may be our duty to preserve life with all possible care, viewing it as a good which has been confided to us by the Almighty, and to make use of every just means for prolonging it. Still, it is not to be forgotten, that this life is not the highest good we can know, and such as it is, we ought to be prepared to hazard it in the cause of our brethren, whenever a sense of duty may call us to the post of danger, or when in defence of sacred principles, the soul's peace can only be secured

by perilling mortal life.

Can we think of that divine and great philan thropist, who sacrificed his invaluable earthly existence on the cross, to save the world, but with admiration and love? His being on earth had but one purpose. He lived, he suffered poverty and scorn; and finally, he died for sinners. His was not that love which is based on extensive selfishness, nor that which arises from familiar associations, and the recollection of happy spent hours. To seek and to save that which was lost, was the sole object of his coming. This interested compassion, was the only principle by which he was animated. His love was universal, and his energy was unbounded. Among all the illustrious names which history has embalmed, for the lasting admiration of mankind, where is there one which for holy zeal and pure benevolence, can be compared with his? He has led us through the wilderness; our bonds have been broken by him, and fall before our eyes—through his merits rise the glories of the New Jerusalem. Such happiness we owe to him, for Christ, as our paschal lamb, suffered for us. When we feel this, can we help also feeling that we, if we would resemble him, should be content to suffer for others? All efforts of benevolence tend to take from sufferers a portion of their burthens, to bear it ourselves. That we shall be more and more happy to do, in proportion as we draw nearer and nearer to Christ.

Dare we, for a moment, claim to be numbered with his disciples, if we have not his example before our eyes, and if to follow it so far as circumstances will permit, be not the object of our hearts. Mean and unworthy should we be, did we hesitate to risk life in a good cause, in the hope of preserving our fellow-creatures from

evil.

Weary and oppressed heart, though thy task be a hard one, cease to complain, that, doomed to labour for thy brethren, for thee there is no repose. Are thy energies devoted to a profession which demands incessant toil—are thy labours almost too great for endurance, while making thyself a servant unto all? Thy life may soon be in the wane—thou mayest soon pass away, and "be no more seen," in consequence of duties so onerous falling on thee, yet sigh not at the aspect of the grave, nor tremble at beholding the rapid strides made towards thee, by the last enemy-death. Descending to the sepulchre, after a life spent in virtuous endeavours to benefit others, will be bliss. There, sweet and refreshing slumber will be thine, and, in due season, thy Saviour and thy God will call thee from the dust, to know the everlasting joys of heaven. To him who has loved much, much will be forgiven. We, alas! may have much to be forgiven, but God's mercy will be allsufficient. While here, conscious of our many deficiencies, we will seek, by charity, to cover some of the multitude of our sins; we will make ourselves servants to all, ministers to all, and the object of our proudest ambition shall be, which can serve the most.

## HEAVENLY LOVE.

I must confess with sorrow, that my love is weak, and my virtue imperfect; nor can the one be supported without thy grace, nor the other be cherished, unless thou fan the holy fire, and feed it with thy heavenly comforts. O, visit me 'hen with thy salvation, and make me to improve under thy

holy discipline. Deliver and purify my heart from all corrupt affections, and irregular passions; heal my spiritual diseases, and take away that dross and filth, which obstructs my purer delights of divine love, discomposes my patience,

and shakes my intentions of perseverance.

For love is great and powerful, an excellent virtue, and mighty advantage in well-doing. It lightens the heaviest burthens, makes difficulties easy, and smooths the rugged ways of duty; takes out the bitterness of sufferings, and gives them a delightful relish. This is the principle which fires us with a vigorous and active zeal, inspires brave and noble attempts, and spurs us on with an impatient desire of still higher degrees of perfection. For love ever labours to be uppermost, and disdains to take up with low and vulgar attainments. It hates confinement, and would fain get loose from all worldly affections; that so its inward and spiritual prospects may not be intercepted by any temporal good or evil, which darken and block it up. In love is the perfection of pleasure and strength; it is higher than heaven; broader than the sea; it fills the spacious Universe, for it is born of God; the first and best of all his creatures, and, as it came from him, so it never rests till it have got above all finite beings, and center again in that only, that infinite good from whence it originally sprung.

Thomas à Kempis.

## MORNING.—MARCH 29.

## GRACE FROM ABOVE.

My stock lies dead, and no increase Doth my dull husbandry improve; O let thy graces without cease Drop from above.

If still the sun should hide his face,
Thy house would but a dungeon prove,
Thy works, nights' captives: O let grace
Drop from above.

The dew doth every morning fall;
And shall the dew outstrip thy dove?
The dew, for which grass cannot call,
Drops from above

Death is still working like a mole,
And digs my grave at each remove:
Let grace work too, and on my soul
Drop from above.

Gems of Sacred l'oetry.

GOD IS OUR SAVIOUR. ISAIAH XLIII.

5 Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 ¶ Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

9 Let all the nations be gatnered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is

10 Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

11 I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

## THE GOSPEL THE SOURCE OF RATIONAL HOPE.

We are told by Jesus Christ, that he came to the world that men might have life, and have it more abundantly; and true it is, that in him we indeed gain the life of life, from which strength and comfort are poured upon us. Whence, but from this source, could the true light come to us, without which we should not know how, becom-The value of it we ingly to worship God? can only estimate from reflecting for a moment, how awful is the condition of the soul, which is left in darkness. How fatal has such a state of things often proved to the weakness of our nature. Lost in mental gloom, what horrible crimes have men perpetrated, and weakly persuaded themselves that such abominations were acceptable to the Deity. Where these have not been witnessed, as regards others, in what revolting extravagances have they indulged; frantically scourging, punishing, and hideously disfiguring themselves in the vain hope of thus conciliating the Eternal!

We dwell not on the lofty scorn, and the ineffable disdain with which a gracious and all-wise Father must regard such gross misconduct in those whom he has created in his own image; but it is only when light from above is granted, that such scenes of mournful degradation are no longer practised or defended. With that light, we gain strength for doing what is really good,—deeds which men and angels must approve. Then the gospel, and the holy examples it contains, are viewed as they ought to be, and felt in all their force. The gospel came with the light from above; its precepts entered into the souls of men, gave them strength to conquer their evil dispositions, and infused a fervent, sincere, and selfdenying devotion, which could sacrifice itself, not in idle, frantic self-inflictions, but in zealous exertions for the good of others.

The strength which has been spoken of, is that of faith, which can remove mountains, and render possible, what may, at first, seem impossible.

It opens to us the most glorious prospects of a future life, and endows the soul with more than mortal wisdom. Dull and cheerless as our lives would be without light, our souls must have remained in a still more dreary state, without strength or hope, if the gospel had not taught men to know that they were the children of God. But for its support, in our weakness, no comfort could be had for the afflicted heart, no solace for the mind torn by grief, when overtaken by unlookedfor ruin. In the state of mental gloom which we contemplate, there could be found no conclusion for the victory of evil on earth; no thought of eternal justice; no hope of retribution in another In Christ alone, in his holy word, in his virtuous death, and in his glorious resurrection,

can we find this unearthly comfort.

Without such comfort, what would this life be? Void of hope and confidence, it would only prove a painful journey through a burning desert, where not a drop of cooling water could be found to allay the fever of a parched tongue. We should have been lost in the wilderness without the means of escape. This reflection gains weight from what we observe in the lives of the Jews and Gentiles, from day to day; and we will, henceforth, never look on the opening of a new morning, without thanking God for granting us the Gospel —and with it life, light, strength and comfort, and that most abundantly. In that gospel he has referred us to the Saviour, and he brings us peace, hope, and joy. He banishes all our fears, and makes us feel that through him we are the heirs of eternal bliss.

Adorable Redeemer! confirm the hearts of those who would now approach thee in this blessed persuasion; encourage us in all our virtuous resolutions, and grant that we may act upon them through this day. Let this have a salutary influence on all our future life. So govern our minds, that we may never disgrace thy holy doctrine by any part of our conduct. Not through us let thy great name be slandered. At all times, in our ordinary occupations, in our worship of thee, and in our conversation; in joy or in sorrow, through life and in death, may we glorify thy love and thy faith, by a discreet, conscientious, and pious deportment. May our light so shine before men, that they may profit from our example, to glorify our Father who is in heaven. Then, at the conclusion of our earthly career, how cheerfully will the weary pilgrims, as they approach the kingdom of their God, look back

exultingly on the days they have known, and on the labours they have performed, while fondly expectant hope aspires to more intimate communion with thee, and life more abundant and everlasting in a happier state of being.

## EFFECTS OF BLIND FANATICISM.

Fanaticism betrays to extravagances which have no connexion with true religion. Even in strong minds, these shew the weakness of our nature. Ignatius Loyola, being made prisoner, and stretched on a bed of suffering, sent for a Dominican friar, made a full confession of all his past sins, and from that hour may be dated the religious monomania which so completely changed the tenor of his ways. Hitherto, he had been a distinguished soldier and courtier. His indomitable energy had made him fortunate; it awed the timid, startled the bold, and grasped success with inflexible resolution; and now, acting upon the same idiosyncrasy, he determined to become a soldier of Christ. Whether Ignatius was actuated by ambition, or real piety, in this resclve, is a matter of doubt. Of course, his followers avow the latter motive; but there are not wanting respectable writers who attribute this remarkable change of feeling to less religious motives-such as ambition and love of notoriety. Be this as it may, the result shewed sincerity.

Whilst a prisoner with the French, Ignatius was kindly treated, and when liberated by an exchange, his captors actually sent a surgeon with him as far as Tolosa, from whence he proceeded home to Loyola. There, still confined to his souch, he gave himself up to the reading of religious works, feeding a fevered and vitiated mental appetite with the wildest and most bigoted monastic fictions and biographies of martyrs, which often, written in solitude by fanatical uneducated monks, teemed with fiery and soul-prostrating horrors. Each day deepened the gloom of this spiritual Quixotism. His most ardent wish became to emulate, in the fifteenth century, the suffering and zeal of the primitive Christian fathers. He sighed to be persecuted, and longed for the hour when canonization would be the meed of martyrdom. In 1521, or the moment he could walk, Ignatius secretly left Loyola on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. A journey from Spain to the Holy Land in those days must have been an undertaking of no ordinary danger, and nothing but enthusiasm and an extraordinary strength of constitution could have carried him through it. On Loyola's return to Europe he entered the University of Alcala to learn Latin, and in 1528 repaired to Paris. By this time the fame of his penances and self-denying charity had spread far and wide. On one occasion he stripped himself to his shirt to clothe a beggar, and in this condition walked to Paris.

To torture himself he professed to think piety; to avoid uncleanness, he was filthy. In one of his letters he writes :-

"I eat but twice of coarse bread, and drink but once of water during the day; subduing the yet rebellious flesh by scourging and vigils. Since the eleventh hour, when I gave my raiments of vanity to the beggar, and covered myself with sackcloth, I have not cut or combed my hair, nor shaved my beard, washed or changed my raiment. [Truly he must have been in the odour of sanctity.] I pray eight times a day, and rise thrice in the night to contemplate the holy cross, before which I scourge myself. I beg my way from town to town with bleeding feet, and meet no pity; for not to be vainglorious in my penance, I leave entire the upper portion of my shoes, so that the people deem I walk upon a pair of good Life of Loyola. stout soles."

## EVENING .-- MARCH 29.

THE TRIALS OF HOPE PREPARE THE GOOD FOR HEAVEN.

O ye, who rule invisible To mortal ken,

And guide with hands all powerful The hearts of men,

Say-why are not the kind and good

More fully blest? With health and peace and competence-

And hearts at rest? Why are they oft-like falling leaves

Tossed to and fro-Chill'd by the world's unpitying blast

Where'er they go?

No friendly voice, no loving heart To cheer their woe;

Sorrow and tears their frequent food; Why is it so?-

Are ye not hovering around, Mysterious powers-

Shedding thy influence over all In troublous hours?

Do ye delight in suff ring worth? Or, is it given,

Spirits of evil to contend With those of Heaven?

It cannot be that He who made The world so fair

Would pleasure take in marring good? Spirits of air?

"Ah! no," (ye whisper in my ear With gentle voice)

"Far holier purpose is ordained, Therefore rejoice. Sorrow, like fire, purifies,

Searching the heart, Cleansing from all impurities The better part.

Anor

## THE LOVE OF THE SAVIOUR. JOHN XVII.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which

shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved me, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

OMITTING TO DO GOOD, IS TO SIN AGAINST GOD.

Men not unfrequently persuade themselves, that while they commit no flagrant sin, their conduct cannot be greatly offensive to God. Bible, however, instructs us, that those who know they have the means of doing good, and omit to do it, commit sin. We too seldom suspect ourselves of sins of omission. Properly awake to a sense of duty, we should feel that to omit doing good, is as decidedly to act against God, though it may be not in the same degree, as to commit evil. Let us ask our hearts if we have not been too prone to delude ourselves with the thought, that little guilt attaches to us for omitted good; for forbearing to serve or to edify another, for neglecting to vindicate his good name, when falsehood and malice assailed it, or for refusing to pardon those who had given us offence. On this point, it is desirable that we should be no longer misled. We must not shut our eyes to the important truth, that to abstain from doing good by every means in our power, is really to commit evil. Each day brings with it new duties, which God is pleased to impose upon us, to try and prove the hearts of his worshippers. With new tasks, new blessings are constantly associated. Not to attend assiduously to the former, is to manifest base ingratitude for the latter.

The life of our Lord while upon earth, is one continued repetition of this most important lesson. He lived to God, by labouring for the good of all mankind. Where he found ignorance, he applied himself to impart true knowledge; where he looked on sorrow, it was his task to console. Where dreadful punishment was impending, his merciful interposition was offered, and where vice displayed its unblushing front, he failed not to supply the timely rebuke. In all his movements we trace active zeal, piety and love. To exercise, in every possible way, unbounded benevolence, was his constant object. It was shewn in all circumstances—in the presence of an insulting enemy, as well as to the faithful disciple; to the sorrowing mother, and to the repentant thief. reproof, and words of kindness; filial love, and god-like charity, mark his glorious progress. This cannot be gainsayed, and if remembered, can the Christian of to-day delude himself into the belief, that not seeking to do good, he is still a true follower of Jesus?

We might often have assisted our fellow-men

with those gifts which we have received from God. Have we done it? With shame and sorrow be it confessed, too seldom have we found ourselves thus occupied. Many have sighed in deep distress, who might have been sought out by us, and in some measure relieved-many have gone astray whom our kindly care might have recalled from their wanderings. Sometimes we have been reluctant from indolence; at others, held back by fear, when we might have successfully exerted ourselves to do good. Frequently we might have vindicated those who were cruelly aspersed, yet we have been meanly silent, from the dread of encountering man's resentment, and from like feelings, we have forborne to put ourselves forward as the champions of virtue and religion, when these have been attacked by the scorner.

By culpable silence, we have seemed to approve what we ought to have been loud to censure.

In our future days, may all our movements be regulated by fear of God, and the love of Jesus Christ. So shall self-love, meanness, vanity, and degrading timidity, be far from us. They shall not influence our conduct. As yet we have done but little of the good which we might have accomplished, and few of our days have been properly spent in the faithful discharge of our duty. Looking back on our past lives, how little cause do we find for rejoicing at the manner in which we have fulfilled our part.

Oh! may our eternal Creator, in mercy, forbear to enter into judgment with his offending children! Filled with true penitence, may we find grace in his sight! while solemnly we promise ourselves anxiously to labour in future days to obey his holy commandments, and unceasingly to aim at doing good. Of the sins of omission we will think lightly no more. It shall be our care to look out for opportunities of doing good. It shall be our study to assist the unfortunate, to enlighten the ignorant, and to reform the sinner. Our will is feeble; but thou, O Lord, who hast graciously promised to be mighty in the weak—deign mercifully to assist us in this our purpose, with the blessed influence of thy Holy Spirit.

MOURNFUL CRUELTIES PERPETRATED IN THE NAME OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is melancholy to trace the course pursued by men who wished to be distinguished as humble and sincere adorers of the true God. Stern zealots loved to denounce Judaism as a religion of blood. In the Old Testament they read, that what was devoted to the Lord, might not be redeemed, but should

assuredly be put to death; and this declaration, with respect to animal life, and the severe denunciation against certain conquered idolators, were regarded as proofs that the Jews held themselves justified, in silently murdering all those who were not of their persuasion. That Jeptha, in fulfilment of a rash vow, had, as they assumed, taken his daughter's life, was construed, by the foes of the Hebrews, to afford the clearest, most indisputable evidence, that because one Jew had sacrificed his own child, every living Israelite would deem it virtue to destroy the children of all Christians! It was pretended that the young victims were put to a most cruel death, being actually crucified, in derision of the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

This horrible calumny was sustained by monstrous inventions. The solemn, peaceful, and interesting festival of the Passover, in which gratitude for past mercies, and an affecting appeal to the God of their fathers, craving his future blessing and support—where rational celebration of former release from bondage, and an anxious petition for future restitution to peace and unity, breathed the pure spirit of true devotion, was denounced as sullied by orgies the most revolting, and instead of the modest repast commemorative of the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, a hideous banquet was imagined, and atrociously ascribed to the persecuted race, which, according to their perverted notions of religion, could only be completed and rendered acceptable to the Almighty, by the addition of blood drawn from Christian veins.

Such frightful cruelty, it was pretended, was perpetrated in conformity with the ancient Jewish law, and the punishment of it was promoted by Bishops, who could not but know, that in scripture the children of Israel were most positively enjoined "to eat no manner of blood," yet, the blood they were supposed to crave, was asserted to be used for making unleavened bread. The commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," was as binding on the Jew as on the Christian; but it was supposed the minds of those it was the practice of the age to pursue with such detestable rancour, were so perverted, that the slaughter of a helpless child, would not be regarded

Life and Times of Lord Cobham.

## MORNING.—MARCH 30.

as murder.

CHRIST ALL IN ALL.

Hark! the song of jubilee,
Loud as mighty thunders roar,
Or the fulness of the sea,
When it breaks upon the shore:
Hallelujah! for the Lord
God omnipotent shall reign;
Hallelujah!—let the word
Echo round the earth and main.

Hallelujah!—hark! the sound
From th' abysses to the skies,
Wakes above, beneath, around,
All creation's harmonies:
See Jehovah's banner furl'd,
Sheath'd his sword!—He speaks—'tis done;
And the kingdoms of this world
Are the kingdoms of his Son

He shall reign from pole to pole,
With illimitable sway;
He shall reign, when, like a scroll,
Yonder heavens have pass'd away;
Then the end;—beneath his rod,
Man's last enemy shall fall;
Hallelujah! Christ in God,
God in Christ, is all in all.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE RELIEVED FROM FEAR.
ISAIAH LIV.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

9 For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee,

nor rebuke thee.

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay

thy foundations with sapphires.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13 And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and

great shall be the peace of thy children.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

## PIOUS MEDITATION CONQUERS THE FEAR OF DEATH.

"Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return," is solemnly announced by the Eternal to be the condition and the doom of man. From the fate indicated, the greatest hero, the proudest monarch, cannot gain exemption. We, must one day share the common lot of humanity. Sooner or later, it will be ours to sleep with those who lived before us, and prove that we are no more than our ancestors were. Of each of us it will be said, if sudden death should not instantaneously effect our removal, "he was sick, and sickness brought him to his end." Those to whom we are dear, will one day assemble round our deathbed, attempting, with tears in their eyes, to soothe the parting spirit. A few brief struggles will then put an end for ever to all those grand designs and laboured schemes, connected with worldly affairs, which have commanded our daily toil, and often destroyed our nightly rest. A few handfuls of earth will suffice to cover these perishing frames which now enclose immortal souls,

and hand them over to the corruption of the grave.

But if it be given to us to foresee with certainty, what must be the fate of our mortal form, why, let us ask ourselves, should we offer all our love to a world so perishable and so vain? Why let it occupy our time and our thoughts, which might be fixed upon heavenly things? Why not

let it occupy our time and our thoughts, which might be fixed upon heavenly things? Why not bestir ourselves to seek the Lord, who, when we are stretched on the bed of sickness, will not fail to prove our best Physician? Let us learn to meditate on a future state, and confirm our hearts in the belief, that, in a better state, we shall meet with those on whom our affections rest while here, and at the same time so conduct ourselves to our fellow-mortals, that tears of gratitude, when we depart, may prove our best funeral origin.

Let us be wise, ere yet it is altogether too late, and active to disentangle ourselves from the dangerous ties of the world. Its deceitful pleasures we should scorn, as well as its perishing glories, anxious only to secure for ourselves immortal treasures above the sky. May our thoughts often ascend, and rapturously dwell on the boon of eternal life, which is offered to us. The sublime theme taken up by our souls will furnish images of bliss without end, for which we ought incessantly to labour. In such a cause, we should confidently put forth all the powers which it has been the pleasure of our great Creator to bestow, and spend our days in a course of salutary activity.

By cultivating such ideas, we shall gain that state of mind which must fully divest death of its terrors. We shall learn to rejoice that we are of the number of those who are to be saved, and who, emancipated from the bonds of the flesh, may look to be transported to the bright abode of their Saviour and their God. Strong in conscious virtue, while temperately enjoying the blessings of this life, we shall exult in our progress from day to day, towards that perfect consummation in bliss, which faith assures us will be ours, and the strength of our pious conviction will increase. We shall have a lively feeling, that for us to live in Christ, and to die is gain, and that which we sincerely believe we shall fearlessly avow. We shall even feel impatient to be removed from this world, that we may live with our Lord. The foolish love of life will be checked by a sense of our bodily imperfections here, and we shall look forward to the consummation of our destiny with Christian hope.

How soothing, how delightful must such a condition be? The gloom which is generally inseparable from the contemplation of death, will, to those who are so armed by due reflection, and pious exercises, be known no more.

God of the just! it is thou who invitest thy creatures to entertain such thoughts. Oh! let them fructify in our souls! Thou hast surrounded us everywhere with images of change and death. Every falling leaf carried away by the blast of autumn, every tree that falls before the woodman's axe, every month that passes away, and every church-yard mound,

"Where fades the turf in many a mouldering heap,"

are ordained by thee to announce to man, in language not to be mistaken, that he must die. May the reflection, that our dust must return to the earth, accompany us every where, and evermore remind us that we ought, awake to our true interest, to live to heaven alone. The thought shall not leave us while we are engaged in our several callings; it shall be revived in our hours of solitude; we will cherish it in moments of rejoicing, and fly to it for purest consolation in those of sorrow.

Now, animated with sacred zeal, we feel, from heavenly meditation sufficiently strong to smile at the fears which ordinarily afflict mortality, as death draws near. Thanks to thee, Lord of all! who hast taught us to know thy ways, we desire but to lead a holy life, to fit us for thy presence, and our interest in heaven secured, we can calmly, joyfully, prepare for the return of these wasting bodies to the dust whence they sprung.

## THE JOYS OF CONVERSION.

The cloud of horror which had so long hung over my mind began rapidly to pass away, every moment came fraught with hopes. I felt persuaded that I was not utterly doomed to destruction. The way of salvation was still, however, hid from my eyes; nor did I see it clearer than before my illness. I only thought, that if it pleased God to spare me, I would lead a better life; and that I would yet escape hell, if a religious observance of my duty would secure me from it. Thus, may the terror of the Lord make a Pharisee; but only the sweet voice of mercy in the gospel can make a Christian.

But the happy period, which was to shake off my fetters, and afford me a clear discovery of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was now arrived. I flung myself into a chair, near the window, and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verse I saw, was, the 25th of the 3rd of Romans: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Immediately I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the sun of righteousness shone upon me. 1 saw the sufficiency of

the atonement he had made for my pardon and complete justification. In a moment I believed, and received the peace

of the gospel.

Unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have been overwhelmed with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder. But the work of the Holy Spirit is best described in his own words:—it is "joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Life of Cowper.

## EVENING.—MARCH 30.

ENJOYMENT AND REST PREPARED FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.

Lord, I believe a rest remains To all thy people known; A rest where pure enjoyment reigns, And thou art lov'd alone.

A rest where all our souls' desire Is fix'd on things above, Where grief, and pain, and fear expire, Cast out by perfect love.

This is the feast of saints on high, But I may taste below; And sweeter tastes will God supply, As into Christ I grow

Golden Treasury.

THE COVENANT-THE SAVIOUR OFFERED FOR THE SINS OF THE MANY. HEBREWS IX.

19 When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God

hath enjoined unto you.

21 Moreover he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood;

and without shedding of blood is no remission.

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the highpriest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others:

26 For then must be often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die; but after

this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second sime without sin unto salvation.

HAPPINESS IN THIS LIFE DEPENDS UPON SUBDUING OUR EVIL PASSIONS.

Much of man's happiness depends upon himself. "Blessed are the pure in heart," was the language of the Holy One who was himself pure in heart in the highest degree. Whatever their condition here, to such the blessedness of heaven will one day be known. Those whose bosoms are pure, and whose lives are irreproachable, even here, are blessed in the midst of pain and sorrow. They are permitted to know that peace which is not of this world; which, in truth, may be regarded as a foretaste of heaven. They learn to smile at the delusions as well as the tribulations of the world. What can impart greater happiness than a satisfied mind,—a mind which, animated by sincere benevolence to man, feels, at the same time, that it has been faithful to God, and sternly maintained its ground against all the temptations of sin? Such blessedness may be ours, if we are willing to make it so. It is a most valuable property, but it is one that every pious mind may acquire, and securely retain, if it continue faithful to the end. The blessing will be potent to abate every care, to soften every grief, while it is a source of ever-springing joy, and of glorious heart-cheering hope.

How vast is thy kindness, O God! in giving to thy feeble and erring children, through the power of thy Holy Spirit, that virtue which will conduct them to heaven, and to become indeed,

even while here, thy images on earth!

This happiness, this matchless prize, many regard with disdain, and are content to degrade themselves, by devoting their thoughts and all their days to sin. To bliss they prefer misery, and the broad way of vice and folly, which the scripture shews must lead to damnation.

Ought we not to feel, that if heavenly compassion offers us a new life, after deserving eternal death, we ought gratefully to accept the condition on which it is offered, by giving ourselves wholly to God? Yet often do we feel within ourselves, even while a prayer is lingering on our lips, that our sinful nature rebels against virtue. Who, who shall deliver us from such awful bondage? On thee we call, O Lord! Subdue our unruly propensities, that while we seek to approach thy throne, we may not be drawn aside by new temptation. Enable us, by thy grace, to conquer our evil thoughts, to quell for ever those sensual appetites which would betray us into a repetition

of our former transgressions. Conquered by thy word, enable us to surrender ourselves the willing captives of thy love, having thrown down the arms of sin.

Omniscient Father! while we present ourselves before thee at this moment, we feel our minds too strongly fixed on the cares and vanities of life: we are contaminated by self-love, which still urges us to seek vicious enjoyments. With this consciousness about us, how can we deem ourselves thy obedient and faithful children? Dare we tondly, confidently call upon thee, as "Our Father?" How blessed should we feel in each succeeding evening, if we could do this with the appropriate warmth of conviction, that we indeed are of the number of those whom thou hast chosen! And are those things, which, weaning our thoughts from thee, would interfere with our salvation, such as could reconcile our minds to so awful a sacrifice? Ah, no! The goods of this world invariably bring unnumbered cares and corrows in their train. From moment to moment, we tremble, lest they should be snatched away. The applause of men is hollow, and soon converted into scorn, and the favour of the great is so evanescent in its character, as to be worthless. Can any of these, then, console a rational mind, for what it must inevitably lose, in turning from the path which leads to heaven?

Yet such shadows have, often and often, been the subjects of our waking thoughts, and of our ardent pursuit. The voice of conscience has been slighted; and, coveting forbidden enjoyments, sinful emotions have been awakened. The knowledge of these things makes us tremble to examine curselves. When we do so, sorrow and confusion come over us, and we can only sigh for our weakness, and pray in all humility, that thou. Oh merciful Father! wilt look down with pity on thy weak and erring children! Grant them strength to burst the fetters imposed upon their thoughts by the world; and, through his merits who came to recal backsliders from their wanderings, create in us clean hearts, that we may cease to offend before thee; that we, by thy goodness, may be

saved.

## SEEK HAPPINESS BY ACTS OF BENEVOLENCE.

Go on, as the charitable disciples of Jesus, to the more baundant exercise of this divine grace, and you shall share in the joy of God himself, who delights, who glories in supplying the wants of his needy offspring. The necessitous case of the numerous poor we have always amongst us, and the calamitous circumstances of the many families and orphans, reduced to the utmost straits through the late mournful situation of our country, are so many loud calls to open every heart and hand, that you may give gifts unto the poor, according to your several abilities; thus shall you express, in a truly noble, Christian manner, your thankful gratitude to the liberal giver, and merciful preserver of all you now enjoy; and thus shall you make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Again,

The Jews sent portions one to another. - Which may hint to us the many social, endearing duties, that should ever adorn the character of all true protestants, and every honesthearted Briton, especially in times of uncommon danger, or uncommon deliverances. Fervent prayers at a throne of grace for our brethren and companions' sake;—a generous concern for one another's welfare ;—a warm regard for the prosperity of them who love and seek the good of the house of the Lord our God ;-mutual acts of special kindness and affection :and the most vigorous, constant endeavours in the pursuit of each other's happiness; are all our undoubted duty.

Webster.

## MORNING,—MARCH 31.

THE GREATNESS OF THE DEITY.

Thee I'll extol, my God and King, Thy endless praise proclaim · This tribute daily will I bring, And ever bless thy name.

Thou, Lord, beyond compare art great, And highly to be prais'd; Thy majesty with boundless height Above our knowledge rais'd.

Renown'd for mighty acts thy fame To future times extends: From age to age thy glorious name Successively descends.

Whilst I thy glory and renown, And wondrous works express; The world with me thy might shall own, And thy great pow'r confess.

Drummond's Collection.

GOD'S ENDURING MERCY. PSALM CVII.

1 O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. 2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath re-

deemed from the hand of the enemy;
3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and

from the west, from the north, and from the south. 4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they

found no city to dwell in.

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most high:

12 Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help.

13 Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.

THE UNCHANGABLE NATURE OF GOD MAN'S BEST CONSOLATION.

While all earthly objects are unceasingly changing, it is consoling to a mind attuned to virtue, and animated by religion, to learn that the Deity can know no change. He is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." When we see all things about us are perishable and insecure, it is something to feel assured that the God we worship cannot fail—that his nature knows no decay, and that his love will ever remain. Neither thy mind nor thy being can alter, O Lord! "Whom have we in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that we can desire but thee."

O God, our father! vouchsafe to us the mercy that this belief may take full possession of our souls, before thou subjectest them to the heaviest trials, which here they may be destined tomeet. Let not thy hand press us too severely before we are duly prepared. Sadwill it be for us, if in the day of sorrow we find no comfort within ourselves, growing on hope in thee. In the cases of others, we see too clearly, how difficult it is to tear our affections from that which the Lord of all may have ordained to take away from us. The heart seems bleeding to death, in irremediable grief. Where would it be, but for faith, and what would be our faith, what our trust, if our God could change?

With lively zeal we must carefully guard against our hearts sinking into utter despondency. Great as our griefs may be, they must not overwhelm our courage. More and more, we will endeavour to fortify our faith in the bounty and compassion of the Most High. By fervent prayers, his gracious aid shall be invoked; we will delight to read his holy word, to meditate on his works, and to note the evidences of his love, and we will strive for his grace by a faithful discharge of those duties, which have devolved upon us here. In this way our hearts shall be encouraged, and confirmed in that faith, which is essential to their tranquillity; the cheering persuasion that our mighty Author will never forsake us.

Bowing to the wisdom of the Omnipotent, we should always suspect our own capacity to judge

what in this world is really for our good. There are few things that we know to be really so. To possess a sound mind, with good bodily health, must always appear to us desirable. Kind friends, with sufficient means, it is also natural for us to desire, but let ours be the prayer of Solomon—

"Remove far from me vanity and lies. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." Those whose wishes are governed by moderation are most likely to gain contentment; striving for too much, we frequently lose our all, and are involved in helpless ruin. Let us then beware of avarice and ambition, for these are among the most formidable enemies of our souls.

The confident hope of heaven is our best wealth on earth. How should we endure the loss of our friends, or our property, without being overcome by despair, did we not feel that we had still something that could not be taken away from us by men? Blessed are we, in the conviction which we have, that we are under the protection of a good and gracious God, who is always the same. Great, too, is our happiness in having been taught a doctrine which assures us of his eternal life, and of his unchangeable holiness. Thrice blessed be his name for affording us this consolation. We shall the less regret the frail and tot tering state of all about us here. Under the most distressing circumstances, it will sustain our fortitude. The pains of earth may be sharp, but they will not be severely felt, while our thoughts ascend to heaven.

Created in thine own image O Lord! we, like thee, are born for life eternal. In thy kingdom the sorrowing heart will be consoled for all the pain it knew below. Regret for vanished wealth, and friends untimely snatched from our love, will there be known no more. Thy matchless bounty, All Glorious Father! will elevate our souls far, far above the anxieties of this life. To us its delusions and its ways will then be equally indifferent. We shall be consoled in the blessed realization of the sacred promise—"Blessed are they that weep, for they shall be comforted."

## GOD'S POWER LXEMPLIFIED.

Our fathers have not hid from us, that in former ages there was a famine of the word in this land; that they wandered from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; that they ran to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and could not find it: that his word was precious in those days; that

for forefathers gave large sums for small fragments of the holy scriptures, a few of St. Paul's epistles, and ran the risk of all in the purchase of them; that Egyptian darkness then overspread this, our native country; that mothers have been burnt at the stake for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue; that the inhumanity of popery was so raging, that children have been forced to set fire to their own parents, a barbarity beyond anything that was ever practised amongst the most savage Indians, no merits or services can secure any from the cruelties of that uncharitable religion. And when afterwards God was pleased to rescue the souls of his people from destruction, his darling from the lions; when the light of the gospel did shine more and more, till it came to the light of a more perfect day; when the holy scriptures by the su-preme authority were translated into their mother tongue, what did parents then do? they sent their children to school to learn to read, and then vast crowds went to the church to hear them; and so mightily the word of God grew and prevailed, that it is amazing, as well as delightful, to look over the solid answers that the meanest mechanics gave to their most learned persecutors. I hope I shall never forget the prowoman, that having put all her adversaries to silence, have you no more to say? I was an honest poor man's daughter, and I have driven the plough many times before my father, but in the cause of God and his truth I will set my foot against the best of you all.

Our fathers have not hid from us the many secret and open attempts against the invaluable life of the glorious Queen Elizabeth, especially the invasion of eighty-eight, when the armada of Spain was styled invincible, and we were upon the very brink of ruin; then did God arise with healing in his wings, and made bare his arm for the salvation of his people, when we knew not which way to turn, nor what to do: then did God command and raise the stormy wind, and lift up the waves of the sea; they mounted up to the heavens; they sunk down to the depths; their soul melted because of trouble. We read the stars in their course fought against Sisera—the winds and seas fought for us. And what was said of haughty Pharaoh and his formidable chariots may be applied to them, they sank into the bottom as a stone, they sank as

lead in the mighty waters.

Joseph Acres.

Watts.

## EVENING.—MARCH 31.

GOD LISTENS TO OUR SUPPLICATIONS.

If you desire a length of days And peace to crown your mortal state, Restrain your feet from impious ways, Your lips from slander and deceit.

The eyes of God regard his saints, His ears are open to their cries; He sets his frowning face against The sons of violence and lies.

To humble souls, and broken hearts, God with his grace is ever nigh; Pardon and hope his love imparts, When men in deep contrition lie.

He tells their tears, he counts their groans His Son redeems their souls from death; His Spirit heals their broken bones, They in his praise employ their breath. THE SEED OF GRACE. MATTHEW XIII.

3 Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root; they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up,

and choked them:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy re-

ceiveth it:

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for awhile: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceit-fulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

## CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN LEADS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

We read in the bible, that the prophet Samuel took, on one occasion, a stone, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord has blessed us." Such a monument of the gracious aid of God, we might with like reason set up, especially this evening, which brings the month to its termination, and closes the first quarter of the year. Within the last three months, we have had much instructive experience; we have received important exhortations, many benefits and blessings, and have known many mingled joys and sorrows, which ought always to be regarded as a series of monuments of God's good providence.

In ourselves, we have, within the same period, detected many errors and failings. The keen pangs of repentance have been ours, and severe tribulation, the consequences of our folly, we have known; and, these felt, should not we be justified in raising to God an altar of remembrance, to mark our thankfulness, for that it has been his good pleasure again to give us the blessed solace of a quiet heart?

Though our sins have not been few, we humbly trust our debasement has not been so great but

we may receive a full and free pardon for them all. We see the abhorrent character of sin. Its hateful marks have made us loathsome to ourselves. It is the revulsion, the horror thus inspired for sin, in the bosom of the sinner, that becomes a sacred source of hope. The sufferings of disease, the corruption of our bodies in the grave, precede our entering upon immortality; and so the vileness of our offences, and the consequent horror of them, lead our awakened spirits into the path which will conduct them to heaven. Instances in the material world, of a like character, are not wanting in the mineral kingdom; the metal seems to be consumed when it is in the course of refinement. The seed cast into the ground, appears to be utterly lost, when it is about to spring from its bed, and multiply itself thirty or forty fold, and the insect sinks in a helpless dormant state, when it is on the point of gaining new powers, and a more active and aspiring existence. Men too frequently rest in full security, in the conviction that they have committed no offence of great enormity, and the consequence of this is, they are not sufficiently awake to the importance of labouring with zeal, to honour their Creator. The energy of the man who deeply feels that he has grievously offended, will sometimes cause him to become eminently righteous, and render him, through the remainder of his life, an illustrious example for the imitation of others. Cases could be quoted, in which he who seemed dead in trespasses and sins, timely alarmed by the danger of his situation, has entered on a new career, with such vigour and perseverance, that thenceforth the desire, the wish, almost the thought of evil, has been unknown.

We feel abashed, when we reflect on the extent of our offending. We could rejoice in the retrospect, if it had always been ours to seek, with pious aspiring, the kingdom of God and his righteousness. As it is, our present delight in the Lord must be mingled with regret for the life we have led. The lost hours which we have given to folly, are deeply mourned as wretchedly mis-spent. The slaves of luxury, we allowed ourselves to be turned wherever our passions and wicked propensities might call us; we cared but to satisfy the longings of vanity, and our hearts were closed to those admonitions and warnings which from time to time essayed to make an impression on our hardened consciences.

Now, O Lord! thou beholdest our sorrow for the irreparable loss, self-inflicted, which we have to lament. While we muse on it, we are humbled, we are alarmed, and it embitters the joyful thankfulness we should otherwise know. Contemplating their magnitude, we feel as if our transgressions could never be blotted from memory,—as if we could never recover our heavenly Father's love.

This leads us to that humility which will restore our peace. We can only pray to thee, O Lord! for mercy, and for new strength to act on the virtuous resolutions which we now form. Seeking thy grace, thou wilt not repel the supplicant who, deeply stung by remorse for having offended his God, avows his unworthiness, and owns that, in justice, he has no claim on thy bounty. Our forbearing Parent, who sent his only-begotten Son to earth, that he might suffer and die, to expiate the offences of men, and gain their pardon, will not reject a lowly, heart-broken penitent. Earnestly we pray, then, looking back on the last three months, owning the magnitude of our transgressions, and justly amazed at the extent of thy forbearance, but at the same time admiring the wondrous ways of thy wisdom, O Lord God! we pray, that thy mercy may take place of thy judgment. Oh! listen to our suit! Have pity on us, and grant that our blindness may be removed, that the leper may be cured, and to the end that we may, in some degree, atone for the past, spare us yet a little longer, to reform our lives, "before we go hence, and are no more seen."

## THE DESPAIRING SINNER RECALLED TO A HOPE OF MERCY.

The accuser of the brethren was ever busy with me night and day, bringing to my recollection, the commission of long-forgotten sins, and charging upon my conscience, things of an indifferent nature as atrocious crimes. Conviction of sin and despair of mercy, were the two prominent evils with which I was continually tormented. But, blessed be the God of my salvation for every sigh I drew, and for every tear I shed, since thus it pleased him to judge me here, that I might not be judged hereafter.

After five months' continued expectation that the divine vengeance would plunge me into the bottomless pit, I became so familiar with despair, as to have contracted a sort of hardiness and indifference as to the event. I began to persuade myself, that while the execution of the sentence was suspended, it would be for my interest to indulge a less horrible train of ideas, than I had been accustomed to muse upon. I entered into conversation with the doctor, laughed at his stories, and told him some of my own to match them; still, however, carrying a sentence of irrevocable doom in my heart. He observed the seeming alteration with pleasure, and began to think my recovery well nigh completed; but the only thing that could promote and effectuate my cure, was yet wanting;—an experimental knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

About this time my brother came from Cambridge to pay me a visit. Dr. C. having informed him, that he thought me better, he was disappointed at finding me almost as silent and reserved as ever. As soon as we were left alone, he asked me how I found myself; I answered, As much better as despair can make me. We went together into the garden. Here, on my expressing a settled assurance of sudden judgment, he protested to me that it was all a delusion; and protested so strongly, that I could not help giving some attention to him. I burst into tears, and cried out, If it be a delusion, then am I the happiest of beings. Something like a ray of hope, was now shot into my heart; but still I was afraid to indulge it.

## MORNING.-APRIL 1.

GOD OUR SUPPORTER.

My God, my everlasting hope, I live upon thy truth; Thine hands have held my childhood up, And strengthen'd all my youth.

My flesh was fashion'd by thy power, With all these limbs of mine: And from my mother's painful hour, I've been entirely thine.

Still has my life new wonders seen Repeated every year; Behold my days that yet remain, I trust them to thy care.

Cast me not off when I decline, When hoary hairs arise; And round me let thy glory shine, Whene'er thy servant dies.

Then in the history of my age,
When men review my days,
They'll read thy love in every page,
In every line thy praise.

Watts.

AWARE OF HIS OWN WEAKNESS, THE CHRISTIAN PUTS
HIS TRUST IN GOD. PSALM LXXVII.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore

- ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

  3 I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained.
- 3 I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.
- 4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
- 5 I have considered the days of old, the years of antient times.
- 6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.
  7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favour-
- able no more?

  8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail
- 9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.

11 I will remember the works of the Lord: surely : will

remember thy wonders of old.

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

MAN'S STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS; HIS NOBLE-NESS AND INSIGNIFICANCE.

"The good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do." Such was the description Paul gave of himself; and if we examine ourselves, we shall find in these few words a correct epitome of our lives. The daily prayers we intended to offer, we have frequently neglected; where we ought to have breathed forgiveness in the spirit of Christian love, we have "suffered the sun to go down on our wrath," and instead of blessing them that cursed us, we have returned hatred for hatred. A retrospective view of our course, presents to our mental view but a chain of sins of omission and commission, various in character and vast in number. We are shocked and astonished at the array against us, and at the weakness, levity, and negligence, we have exhibited in concerns so momentous, where the penalty of awful perdition was to be incurred, and the prize of eternal life to be gained.

Yet sometimes we cannot but feel that we did good and avoided evil; we practised humility and self-denial, meekness and charity. We might even lay claim to other virtues. Strange, that man should, from time to time, be unlike himself; so weak and so strong, so grovelling, and so sublime. It is passing strange, that the mortal who can compass so much, should, under ordinary circumstances, do so little that, deaf to reason, he should disregard the most earnest exhortations to amend his life. Who can solve this riddle? Who can tell why it was the pleasure of our Maker to centre in us such extremes? He only can answer the question, who made man as he is, and who sees his most secret thoughts.

Would we reform our wayward dispositions, let us fix our eyes on the great Author of Christianity. We shall there learn universal benevolence. This is taught in the gospel, and nowhere else so efficiently. Revolutionary France, with her sceptic-creed, offered fraternity to all the human race; but the manner in which this was carried out by those who denounced Christianity, is traced on the historic page in characters of blood. They outraged the best feelings of our nature, and all that men deem sacred was ruth-

lessly trampled under foot, by those who proclaimed themselves to the world as reformers.

Greatly as we have erred, the recollection of God's omniscience, and the reflection that we must be called to an account for our actions, will steel us, for the time to come, against yielding to our evil passions. To render good to others, shall be our constant endeavour, and that with the greatest promptitude. Ever let us supplicate our heavenly Father, for his gracious aid in our praiseworthy undertakings. The Society in which we indulge, and our books, shall be more select than heretofore, that our habits may become more temperate and discreet. May he who created us, and gave us both the heart to will and the power to do good, bless with his favour our efforts to amend our lives. Here, humbled in the dust before thee, thy creatures implore thy succour, Oh Lord!

## THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT NEGLECTING PRAYER.

The longer we neglect writing to an absent friend, the less mind we have to set about it.—So, the more we neglect private prayer and closet communion with God, the more shy we grow in our approaches to him. Nothing breeds a greater strangeness between the soul and God, than the restraining of prayer before him. And nothing would renew the blessed intimacy, if God himself, the neglected party, did not, as it were, send us a letter of expostulation from heaven, and sweetly chide us for our negligence. Then we melt; then we kindle; and the blissful intercourse gradually opens as usual.

David would not have been so often upon his knees in prayer, if affliction had not weighed him down.—There are, I believe, more prayers in the writings of David and of Jeremiah, than in any other portion of scripture.

The longer you are with God on the mount of private prayer and secret communion with him, the brighter will your

face shine when you come down.

We may pray spiritually, by a form; and we may pray formally and coldly without one.—Suppose I was to say to a converted dissenter, "Sir, you do not sing the praises of God spiritually." He would ask, "why not?" Was I to answer, "Because you sing by a form: Dr. Watts's psalms and hymns are all precomposed: they are forms, in the strictest sense of the word:" the good man would reply, "True: they are precomposed forms: but I can sing them very spiritually for all that." I should rejoin, "And I can pray in the words of the Liturgy, as spiritually as you can sing in the words of Dr. Watts."

Toplady.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 1.

THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE HUMBLE ARE THE BLESSED.

The Lord is in his holy place,
And from his throne on high
He looks upon the human race
With omnipresent eye.

He proves the righteous, marks their path; In Him the weak are strong: But violence provokes his wrath, The Lord abhorreth wrong.

God on the wicked will rain down
Brimstone, and fire, and snares;
The gloom and tempest of his frown
—This portion shall be theirs.

The righteous Lord will take deligh Alone in righteousness; The just are pleasing in his sight, The humble He will bless.

Montgomery.

THE SINNER IS SAVED BY HUMILITY AND PENITENCE LUKE XVIII.

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a

Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I

possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be

## THE FAVOUR OF THE ALMIGHTY NOT TO BE GAINED BY A MERE OBSERVANCE OF SACRED FORMS.

"Thou appointest the moon for seasons, O Lord!" This we collect from the scriptures, and with the present day, the moon commences a new section of time, to mark the progress of the year. In certain countries, old connections are ordinarily dissolved on this day, and new ones are formed, so that the opening of the month becomes

an important era in the lives of many.

To us, as to many others, it may have happened that important arrangements affecting our comfort, have been made from this period of the year. Looking to these, and to what their influence has been, have we not abundant cause to rejoice in the care and the providence of our Lord? In their progress it has been his good pleasure to manifest to us his will, and with admiring gratitude we see his kindness and wisdom are conspicuous throughout. Happy and unfortunate occurrences have been among the means used to try our hearts. The history of these which we can now read, shows to us the causes of most of the evils which have disturbed our repose. Had we

always been faithful to duty, faithful worshippers of God, and just to man, many of the sorrows which we have known might have been spared.

With deep humiliation we confess that this has not been constantly borne in mind. Misled by selfish love, a sordid anxiety for gain, and by empty pride, we have not had proper regard for the rights and the feelings of others. We have not conciliated our equals; we have been wanting in respect to our superiors; and to those beneath us, we have not extended that indulgence, that sympathy, and that kindly consideration for which

they had a right to hope.

These, our failings, we have cause to remember with unaffected sorrow. We regard them as blots on our past career, and lament that our repentance does not wholly obliterate them. The time which has passed, cannot be recalled—vesterday will not return at our bidding, and too late we are awake to the conviction that it is not professions of Christianity, or singing hymns in praise of God, that will tend to our salvation, while eager for the treasures of this world, we act with cruelty and injustice to man. The all-wise Being who created us, is not to be imposed upon by solemn rites or high sounding words, and they who seek to gain his approbation by such observances, while their hearts are engaged in unholy pursuits, will find themselves miserably deceived.

We can only hope to repair our error, by sincerely resolving that in future, with the most loving care, we will attend to the performance of duties, which have heretofore been slighted. Those which God has prescribed for us, and which our own hearts tell us, ought never to have been forgotten, shall now be zealously performed. Our minds shall be warmed with new eagerness to benefit all our fellow creatures; and all temptations to meanness and avarice, shall be steadily resisted. Thy assistance, O Lord, we claim, that through the rest of our lives, our bosoms may contain no thought; our hearts know no desire, but such as thou wilt approve, encourage, and further with

thy blesssing.

WHAT IS GRACE.

Grace is the silver link that draws the golden link of glory after it.

As paper receives, from the press, letter for letter; as the wax receives, from the seal, print for print; or as the glass receives face for face; so do believers receive, from Christ, grace for grace: i.e. for every grace that is in him, there is a measure of the same in them.

Dyer.

Men dote upon establishing a righteousness of their own to bring them to Christ; and think it is presumptuous, or licentious doctrine, that Christ may be theirs, and they receive

him, considered simply as ungodly and as enemies. But such are abominably injurious to the faith of Jesus Christ, and to the exceeding bounty of his grace; which saves from sin, without respect of anything in the creature, that he himself might have the praise of the glory of his own grace.

Grace, properly so called, is nothing else but God's mere favour and bounty, and loving-kindness itself. Consequently, sanctification is not so properly grace itself, as the fruit of grace. God first casts his favour and loving-kindness upon a person; and then, out of his favour, issue the several fruits of his loving-kindness: which fruits, are those fruits of the spirit, frequently mentioned by the apostle.

God neither looks to anything in the creature, to win him to shew kindness; nor yet anything in the creature to debar him: neither righteousness in men, that persuades God to pardon sin; nor unrighteousness in men, that hinders him from giving this pardon, and acquitting them from their transgressions. It is only and simply for his own sake, that he nordon men.

he pardons men.

The sanctifying principle of grace in the heart, may be compared to a candle in a lanthorn; which transmits its light through the lanthorn, though, in and of itself, the lanthorn

still continues (what it was before) a dark body.

Lady Huntingdon, in Conversation

## MORNING .-- APRIL 2.

## PROVIDENCE ALL-SUFFICIENT.

The Lord is my shepherd, no want shall I know;
I feed in green pastures, safe-folded I rest:
He leadeth my soul where the still waters flow,
Restores me when wandering, redeems when opprest.

Through the valley and shadow of death though I stray, Since thou art my guardian, no evil I fear; Thy rod shall defend me, thy staff be my stay, No harm can befal, with my Comforter near.

In the midst of affliction my table is spread;
With blessings unmeasured my cup runneth o'er;
With perfume and oil thou anointest my head;
Oh what shall I ask of thy Providence more?

Let goodness and mercy, my bountiful God,
Still follow my steps till I meet thee above;
I seek,—by the path which my forefathers trod
Through the land of their sojourn,—thy kingdom of
love.

Montgomery.

GOD WILL COMFORT HIS PEOPLE, AND EXALT HIS SERVANTS. ISAIAH LII.

4 Thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: be-

hold, it is I.

7 ¶ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that

bringeth good tidings of good that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

9 ¶ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

10 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

11 ¶ Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.

12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.

13 ¶ Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

### THE CHRISTIAN FINDS HAPPINESS IN THE CON-VICTION THAT ALL THINGS ARE ORDERED FOR THE BEST.

To be content with those things which it has been the will of the Eternal to grant for our solace, we are told in scripture, is the duty of man. But to act up to this, is sometimes a hard task for sensual, effeminate, and spoiled minds, such as we know our own to be. Nothing is more contrary to the nature of man, than to be content with the good his Creator may send. The dissatisfied heart still claims more than it has received, and persuades itself that it ought, of right, to possess greater advantages, than it has yet contrived to gain. This is not well. To Christian virtue and peace of mind, moderation, and a disposition to be contented, are necessary. The wishes of a sober, grateful heart, are easily met; when satisfied, elevated enjoyment is known; and under almost any circumstances, life is felt as a blessing, however dreary, to common eyes, the prospect before us may seem. On the other hand, the greatest advantages are rendered nugatory, by a sordid and repining spirit, and the insatiable mind still craves that which, if obtained, would prove pernicious. If we inquire what was the real source of the grief which lately depressed our spirits, we shall find that it was nothing less than presumptuous disapprobation of the government of God, and a weak and foolish eagerness to call that ours which was not essential to our wellbeing. In this way, many hours of dulness and sorrow have we prepared for ourselves; for, unreasonable as we were, the goodness of our God would not suffice. That which he had granted, and placed within our reach, fell short of what we

imagined to be our due, and we still impatiently panted for an improvement in our condition.

When we recal what our wishes have been, and compare our actual condition with that of others who have realised those advantages which to us are denied, what is the result? feel that we have just cause for thankfulness. That which has been called the happier lot of our neighbours, has been the cause of their acquiring habits fatal to the body's health, and injurious to the ultimate prospects of the soul. Had such benefits been granted to us, in sensual pleasure we might have forgotten the giver of all good. Soon betrayed to evil, the mind that is not exercised in salutary trials, too often surrenders itself to pride, and becomes indifferent to the sufferings of others. Had God given us days of earthly felicity, we might, like many of our fellow-men, have forgotten our duty, and our mighty Benefactor, and led a godless life of cold insensibility, forgetful of our original nothingness. That we have not done so, it is comfort to believe; it is a gracious answer to the prayer which our Saviour taught us to breathe, "Lead us not into temptation."

What ground for regret have we then, that we are not more affluent, more distinguished by worldly honours? Had all the wishes we have weakly indulged, and presumptuously laid before the Eternal been gratified, far from being thereby rendered happy, we should have become objects of commiseration. Dim as our vision is, this we can clearly perceive. Blessed, then, ever blessed, be his name, who in his wisdom and his bounty, grants his worshippers, not what they ask, but what they require. The ways of man are unlike the ways of God, and we therefore join to praise that goodness which has not left us to suffer under the full weight of our weakness, but averting from us greater real calamities than were in our contemplation, has ordered all for the best.

Though heretofore we may have deplored that much of the world's goods, on which we set a high value, has been withdrawn from us, for this, with the rest, oh Father, accept the tribute of our thanks.

By the influence of thy Holy Spirit, be graciously pleased to grant that the evil which yet lurks within us, may be finally conquered. Enable us to triumph over all our sinful propensities, the fruitful source of growing discontent. We own, with unaffected gratitude, that thou hast been pleased to bestow what was most essential

to our well being, in time and in eternity. While this we truly feel, Oh! may we wisely use the benefits we desire to acknowledge. Placed in the position which we now occupy, we doubt not thou hast foreseen that it would tend to our future happiness. To feel assured of that, shall be a source of joy to us in this life; and the heart, satisfied and grateful, will know peace. It shall henceforth give itself up to thy will, and acknowledge all thy dispensations bountiful as they are wise, since, left to our own guidance, we should have taken to courses widely different from those which we have happily learned to pursue, nor could we, as now, look with calmpiness, and joyful expectation, to eternal hapness.

Continue, O Lord! to favour thy servants with renewed marks of thy loving kindness. Grant to us contrite hearts, ever eager to seek truth, ever anxious to learn thy ways, and do thy will, and to submit unrepiningly to thy decrees. Not worldly pleasure, not wealth, not glory here, do we covet. Thy grace shall be our most valued treasure—the name of Christian our proudest boast; and to gain thy favour shall be our constant endeavour, and our only ambition. Satisfied with our present lot, in the conviction that what thou doest cannot be other than right, moderate exultation shall take place of hungry cravings. We aspire, O Lord! but to serve thee with animated zeal and a pure conscience. May this our earnest prayer meet with thy approving smile, and thy potent aid be ever at hand to save us from temptation, in the hour of peril.

#### WEALTH CANNOT GIVE SECURITY.

And this was a strange thing that happened of late in the yeare of grace, one thousand five hundred ninetie one: there was one Mark Bragadin that professed himselfe to bee an excellent alcumist, but indeed a notable magician. This man came from Venice into Baviere, and there practised to make gold in such abundance, that he would give his friends whole lumps of gold; making no more estimation of gold than of brass or iron: he lived stately like a prince, kept a bountifull house, and had servants of great account, and was saluted with a title of dignitie, and drew many princes into admiration of him; insomuch, as he was accounted another Para-And after hee had long exercised his art, made himselfe knowne to all the princes, and was desired of them all, hee came at length into the Duke of Baviere's court, who finding after a while his fraud and illusions, committed him to prison. And when the Duke had commanded him to bee examined, and put to the torture, he desired he might suffer no such paine, promising that he would confesse of his own accord all the wickedness that ever he had comitted, and exhibited accordingly to the Duke, in writing, the whole course of his lewd life, desiring neverthelesse that it might not be

published. Hee confessed, that he was worthy to dye, but yet made humble sute that his concubine Signora Caura, and his whole familie, might returne untouched into Italie. Not long after, sentence was given against him. First: that his two dogs, whose help he had used in his magicke matters, should be shot through with muskets, and himselfe should have his head stricken off. For this mild sentence hee gave thanks to the prince, alledging he had deserved a much more severe judgment, and at least was worthy to be burned. The next day a new gallowes was set up, covered with copper, and an halter tyed in the middest, covered likewise with copper, signifying his deceit in making gold. Hard by the gallowes was set up a scaffold aloft, covered with blacke cloth: upon the scaffold was placed a seat, wherein this alcumist sate, arrayed in mourning apparell. And as he sate the executioner strake off his head.

Barckley's Felicitie of Man.

# EVENING .- APRIL 2.

#### WEAKNESS OF HEART DEPLORED.

Oh Lord, how faithless is my heart, How very apt from Thee to stray! Just like a broken bow I start, And nature strives to bear the sway: Was ever one so vile, yet bless'd; So foul, yet by the Lord caress'd!

Forbid, my Lord, each vain desire, And bind my passions to thy cross; Quench all the sparks of nature's fire, And bid me count my gain but loss: Lord Jesus, tear each idol down, And 'stablish in my heart thy throne!

Grace, grace shall wipe away my tears, And speak the tempest to a calm; Shall warm my heart, and charm my fears, And prove a never-failing balm: The maladies of sin remove, And fill my soul with holy love.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

# THE CONVERTED SINNER MUST BE AS A LITTLE CHILD. MATTHEW XVIII.

- 2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in
- the midst of them.

  3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.
- 3 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- 5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.
- 6 But whose shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depta of the sea.
- 7 ¶ Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt and maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

# THE OUTWARD SHOW OF RELIGION VALUELESS, WITHOUT SINCERITY OF HEART.

Sacrifice and offering we read in scripture, the Lord regards not. By this we are to understand that outward signs of devotion—that the mere homage of tongues and lips, will not suffice for the worship of the Most High; but he claims the heart, and in proof of the heart being devoted to him, requires that we abandon our evil ways; for abstinence from sin is that which God approves. It is only when founded on holy intentions that external worship is agreeable to our Maker. Are we free from the delusion, that forms and ceremonies professing to have his glory for their object, are of no avail by themselves? When we pray, what is the frame of our mind? Do we address him with fervour, at church; or at home, with unaffected devotion? Is the song of praise, which we offer to him, born of the spirit, or a mere habitual exercise in which the soul has no part? Do we, when we approach the temple of the eternal, offer ourselves as sacrifices to God? To these questions our consciences can give but unsatisfactory answers; and we find much -- much is wanting to prove that we are really pious.

Humiliating as the acknowledgment is, it cannot be denied, that much is still wanting, before we can safely hold ourselves to be truly pious. Pernicious must all endeavours prove to veil the truth, and to conceal from our own view, the folds and the stains which are to be found in our hearts. How have we exercised our invention to find excuses for, and palliation of, the grave faults which we have committed. In such cases, are we not our own enemies? Assuredly the spirit would be much calmer; our spirits much more cheerful, and the joys of life, less frequently disturbed, if we kept the even tenour of our way, as worshippers of the true God; and this we should be in a fairer way of doing, if we ceased to palliate our favourite sins, by treating them in our own case as venial errors. We must not be self-deluded, nor suffer ourselves to be too easily misled by the mild names which our connexions may give to what ought to be regarded as serious transgres-

sions, and with which the thoughtless, wicked world, may be content to gloss them over.

While such thoughts occur to us, we have continued to deceive ourselves; have regarded ourselves as true Christians, and exulted in the faith that was in us; yet, at the same time, condemned others with severity, for the offences of which we

knew ourselves to be guilty.

What meanness of heart does this exhibit! How abject do we feel while we discover in ourselves such weakness—how are we humbled and confounded. Hitherto privileged to wear the Christian name, we have degraded it by affecting to worship the Lord of all, while our hearts, gloating on worldly pleasures, were far from him, repeating vows with our lips, to which we have subsequently paid no regard. To our own gross misconduct, we shut our eyes, and were hypocrites

without knowing it.

With alarm and horror, we see that we have lived in careless security, while our danger was most imminent, while the greatest calamity mortals can know, impended over us; the loss of our eternal souls. Of this, before thee, O God, we make humble confession. Deeply afflicted by the retrospect, we feel how much we have against thee-how fatally we have sinned wronged ourselves. To thy service we now humbly devote ourselves; thy worship, thy glory, shall be constantly in our thoughts, from this time forward; and we anxiously trust, thy sustaining aid will not be withheld. Enlarge our understandings to strengthen the will, we now feel. Let thy grace and mercy conduct us into the right path. There, with thy blessing, while we continue on earth, we trust ever to remain.

#### THE CAST-AWAY IS THE SLAVE OF SIN.

When the apostle, speaks of being a cast-away, he only supposes the possibility of that awful catastrophe, under cer tain circumstances; namely, that he should cease, to hold his body in subjection, and that the passions, should, once more, become his tyrants, as they were, now, his slaves; a moral revolution, which could never happen, while he possessed what, he was assured, he would never lose, excepting by his own wilful negligence, "the grace of God." Hence, both the necessity, and the nature of the precaution, while they demonstrate the existence, and develope the imminence of the danger, are, at the same time, an intimation, and an evidence of the strength, that shall be given us, to encounter, and to overcome it. And, accordingly, so long as we have the testimony of conscience, and of experience, that we exercise a due control over our inclinations, and desires, that testimony, is itself a pledge, that the "promise of our God, standeth sure," and that we shall be "kept by grace, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." And, well for us, that it is so, since words cannot convey an ade

quate idea of the tremendous risk that we incur, by loosening the chains in which our captive passions are bound, and suffering them, once more, to exchange the posture of submission for the attitude of defiance. For the deadliest thrust is often aimed by the prostrate foe; and unless the shield of faith be objected in an instant, a wound may be thus inflicted, which shall be even fatal to the soul.

The danger to which the want of this precaution, would expose us, is powerfully expressed by the emphatic word " cast-away," a word appropriated, in its primary meaning, to metallic substances, which have been tried in the furnace, and proved to be drossy, corrupt, and worthless-and which are, consequently, thrown aside, as wholly unfit, either for useful or ornamental purposes. The term, which is of rare occurrence in the sacred volume, is usually translated "reprobate." We have precisely the same figure in Jerem. vi. 30, where the prophet, speaking of the men of Israel, says, "reprobate," or, as it is in the margin, "refuse silver, shall men call them, because Jehovah hath rejected them." By the same term, the apostle characterizes false teachers, apostates from, and opposers of the truth ;- "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith;" and speaking to Titus of a character, still more common, namely, an unsound and hypocritical professor of religion, he delineates their spiritual state in these awful words: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work, reprobate."

T. Dale.

# MORNING.—APRIL 3.

FOLLOW THE SAVIOUR.

Dear Shepherd of the chosen flock, I love to hear thy voice: When full of kind redeeming love, Thou bidst my heart rejoice.

O! let me never quit the road, That leads to thine abode; O! suffer not my feet to stray From thee, the living God.

'Tis thy delightful work to save,
Thy pleasure and thy joy;
Then let thy praise each fleeting hour
My grateful thoughts employ.

A stranger, Lord, I will not know, Through thy preserving grace; But follow thee with cheerful steps To heaven, thy dwelling-place.

Christian Retirement.

GOD'S MERCY ENDURES FOR EVER. I. CHRON. XVI.

23 Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.
24 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous

works among all nations.

25 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

27 Glory and honour are in his presence, strength and gladness are in his place.

28 Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

29 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering and come before him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

30 Fear before him all the earth: the world also shall be

stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.

32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields

rejoice, and all that is therein.

33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth.

34 O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

35 And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

36 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever.

#### LABOUR WITH UNCEASING ZEAL TO DO GOOD.

Christians are advised by the apostle to comfort one another. Many opportunities have offered, in which we might have comforted others, of which we have not availed ourselves. Many of our fellow-creatures have risen this morning, who with us have gazed on the same rising sun, with grief, and solicitude, and trouble for the new tribulation which the day is likely to produce. How much do we owe to thee, for all thy goodness, O God! Thousands of our brethren, while we have enjoyed refreshing rest, have passed the night in sleepless anxiety. Deign to have mercy upon them, and abate those afflictions which almost overpower them. Thou hast the power to relieve; be graciously pleased to exert it; give them that comfort which they in vain seek from men, and let them know peace. Shouldst thou have ordained that aid shall most promptly be supplied,—should thi sday close as gloomily as it has opened, grant them that serenity and resignation of which the life of their Saviour furnished so striking an example; whose cry, while enduring the keenest agony, was, "not mine, but thy will, O God, be done!" Enable them to preserve the settled conviction, that thou chastenest those thou lovest, and that hereafter it will be theirs to reap a harvest of joy, raised from thseed of tears.

We bless thy goodness, for the privileges which thou hast granted to us, and especially that we have lived to see another morning, in health and peace. Do we feel that we are more virtuous than those who are doomed to suffer? Oh no! Lord, it is thy bounty alone which has preserved as from evil, thy incomprehensible grace!

For every blessing we desire to praise thee, thou Giver of all good, who art love itself! Thou hast done great things, and we would fain honour thee—not with our lips alone—with our heart of hearts; we seek to glorify thy name, by amendment in our lives. Of the various blessings vouchsafed to us, we are anxious to make a temperate use; to avoid all sinful excesses, and to devote all our energies to thy service.

While we have vigour to do what we think is in thy sight good, and to withdraw from sin: while we are still alive and in health, we resolve, in all our actions, to have the honour of our Eternal Father, and the welfare of our fellow-creatures in view. In order to do this, we must turn our eyes to the gospel. There we find the pledges of true morality. Its precepts go to render us "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." It teaches us to "do unto others as we would they should do unto us;" and more than that, it exhorts us to aim at being "perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect." These noble and endearing principles of morality, are a part of the Christian's faith. These salutary rules, the worthy gift of our immortal Donor, ought ever to be regarded as treasures of surpassing worth. May we cherish them while we live.

Yet that may be for a very short space. How long shall we be capable of speaking or of thinking? The day, the hour, may be near at hand, when our existence shall reach its close. Disease may speedily deprive us of all power, and the sufferings of a sick-bed take from us our activity. Should such be the Eternal will, what consolation can we have, like the reflection, that while it was possessed, we made a good use of our strength?

Perfectly aware of that, O Lord! we now resolve to do good, whenever we have the means of benefiting our fellow-creatures. We will not be soon weary of the grateful toil, and we will reap, while yet it is the time for reaping. Make us, O God! awake to the importance of this, that we may always gladly move in thy cause, and carefully perform that task which has been assigned to us. Indefatigably we propose to labour, lest death surprise us, and the night suddenly come, in which no man can work. While thou art pleased to prolong our days, humbly we trust the life thou mayest spare, will be devoted to piety and thee.

CHRISTIAN SELF-EXAMINATION.

The great question is, Have I washed in that fountain, which God has opened for sin and for uncleanness, and have I been really cleansed there? Is the power of sin giving way, and the love of holiness gradually gaining strength in my heart? O brethren, how few among us could bear to bring our profession of Christianity to such a test as this! We have no heart-felt sense of our spiritual pollution; we feel not our need of Christ: we desire not the washing of his blood. As for inward purity, purity of heart, we seldom think of it, and can hardly understand what is meant by it. But what is that hope of heaven worth, which is not accompanied with this inward purity? Does not the scripture say, "He, that hath this hope in him," a good hope of heaven, "purifieth himself, even as God is pure?" and do not your consciences testify, that there is no communion between purity and you? Dare not then, in direct opposition to the word of God, dare not to hope for heaven till sin is become hateful to your soul, and perfect holiness the first wish of your heart; till you have gone with a feeling, penitent, and believing heart, to the fountain which infinite mercy has opened for sin and uncleanness, and washed your defiled robes and made them white in its sacred water. This fountain is still standing open for sinners. The Redeemer's work of salvation is not yet completed. Though he has already carried innumerable thousands to his house, there yet is room, room for thousands more, room for you. Do you really desire to enter in? Have you a willing and an humble heart? This is all a gracious Saviour asks.

Bradley.

# EVENING.—APRIL 3.

GOD CHEEKS THE MOURNER.
Sing ye saints, sing praises,
Call his love to mind,
For a moment angry,
But for ever kind;
Grief may, like a pilgrim.

Grief may, like a pilgrim,
Through the night sojourn,
Yet shall joy to-morrow
With the sun return.

In my wealth I vaunted,
"Nought shall move me hence;"
Thou hadst made my mountain
Strong in thy defence:
—Then thy face was hidden,
Trouble laid me low,

"Lord," I cried, most humbly
"Why forsake me so?
"Would my blood appease Thee,

In atonement shed?
Can the dust give glory,—
Praise employ the dead?
Hear me, Lord, in mercy!
God, my helper, hear:"
—Long Thou didst not tarry,
Help and health were near

Thou hast turn'd my mourning Into minstrelsy, Girded me with glaaness, Set from thraldom free:

Thee my ransom'd powers
Henceforth shall adore,
Thee, my great Deliverer,

Bless for evermore. Montgomery.

THOUGH GOD MAY FORSAKE HIS PEOPLE FOR A MOMENT,
GREAT MERCIES MAY BE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW.
ISAIAH, CHAP. LIV.

1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy

cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not re-

member the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The

God of the whole earth shall he be called.

6 For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with

great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

#### GLOOMY PATHS LEAD TO ETERNAL HAPPINESS.

We are commanded in scripture to obey the voice of the Lord our God. We may feel this to be a duty which, in certain circumstances, it is no easy task to fulfil. There are moments when sad occurrences fill our bosoms with despondency, when for us the sun seems no longer to shine, and all around is appalling gloom. At such seasons, while the present distresses, and the future alarms, to be collected, to shew ourselves perfectly resigned, is no easy task; but it is one which the true Christian believes it is wisdom to perform. Short-sighted mortals little know what will prove most conducive to their own peace. We often change our purposes, and suffer from fears and doubts of our own creation; and our foolish schemes, and rash enterprises, prepare for us distress, which greater confidence in the benevolence of our Maker, and less self-sufficiency would have spared us altogether. True wisdom, then, must incline us to go where God calls. His will is holy; he is kind and gracious; let us therefore take that path which he may point out to us, the path of duty; assured that, dark as it may be, and beset with dangers, it is the safest we can tread.

Ambitious of his favour, we must not murmur, should it be his pleasure to withdraw those bles-

sings which he has granted us for a time. may resign the treasure with tears and mourning. but we ought not to complain. The connexion which may exist between our sufferings and the developement of our immortal spirits, can be but imperfectly known to us; but we ought evermore to bear in mind, that all things work together for good, to those who know God. When the shades of night have fallen on the earth, if we are obliged to travel in dangerous and unknown roads, how are we strengthened and comforted, when we meet with a friendly guide, to whom we can safely trust ourselves. With such a companion, the gloom is no longer appalling, and assisted by him, the pilgrim cheerfully advances, assured that he will be enabled successfully to accomplish the object of his journey.

Feels not the Christian his whole heart warmed with true devotion, that such a guide is at hand to assist him in the most perilous moments of his life? The Almighty himself, in his abounding love, may be said to offer us his paternal hand, when we are encompassed by threatening and afflicting difficulties, to guide us through the dark and dangerous ways which we have to pass in this

world.

It is even so. Let our hearts rejoice in the thought, that God himself is our guide. Shall we madly refuse his outstretched hand? shall we daringly scorn his proffered guidance? Never! Let us gladly listen to the call of the wise and bounteous Author of our being, and he will conduct us in safety from this dreary world of sorrow, to the regions of eternal day. To neglect his voice were fatuity. It would be wholly inexcusable in those who are acquainted with the instructions given, and the promises made by our Redeemer, as well as with the example which he condescended to set before our eyes.

This ought to be fully understood; there can be no peace, no comfort for our souls, without humble submission to the will of God. Let, then, our cry be that of Jesus,—" Not our will, O Father!

but thy will be done."

However sorely we may be oppressed with sorrow, this should be our thought, even though we breathe it with a broken heart. It is natural for men to sigh, and to feel heaviness of spirit. From this weakness, even our great Captain himself was not wholly exempt; and from him, in the moment of his suffering, was heard the thrilling exclamation, "Father, to whom all things are possible, let this cup pass from me;" but still he

with resigned to the awful alternative, and men must learn to submit to the visitations reserved for them by Infinite Wisdom, as their Saviour did before them.

But this blessed consolation remains to the faithful worshipper of God,—he knows that a great and good Father wounds not his children in wantonness. In his own good time, he will heal the wound, and make us rejoice in the infliction. It is not for us to doubt that such will eventually be the case, even while we feel the sharpest pains. Cheer up, then, be comforted, thou that faintest on thy road. The rugged and thorny path which thou art commanded to tread, leads to heaven. Rejoice in the prospect before thee. Thy Almighty Father calls;—with devout resolution, obey.

#### NO HAPPINESS IN SENSUAL PLEASURES.

I being inspired with divine grace, acknowledged mine offences, and leaving the dark region of sinne and vanity, through the ayde and conduction of the divine grace, am returned to mine eternall Father, humbly requiring pardon and mercy, who, of his unspeakable mercy, hath lovingly received me; but how all this has been done I will declare unto you, praying you patiently to give me the hearing, and attentively consider my talke, and well to note the whole from the begin-

ning to the end. When I had passed in all folly and lasciviousness three weeks of the years of my age, that is to say, my infancy, child-age, and youth, which make together one-and-twentie years, I entered into the age of a young man, which is the fourth week of my age, which is between two-and-twentie and four-and-twentie years; at five-and-twentie, I was minded to take a voyage by my foolish industrie to seek where in this world I might find true felicitie and happiness, which seemed to my sottish sense an easy matter; being young, strong, wild, hardy, and couragiously disposed, methought in my mind to live in the world without felicitie was a life worse than death; but, alas! being plunged in the darkness of ignorance, I considered not that true felicitie was the gift of God from above, and cannot be attained without his help. Being robbed of reason, I thought it might come easilie of myself, without the help of others; so then I sought true felicitie where she is not, was not, nor ever shall bee: as, in riches, worldly pleasure, strength, honour, and delights of the flesh.

But I was, in so thinking, as very a fool as he who hopeth with angling lines to catch fishes in the air, or with the hounds to hunt the hare in the ocean sea. Were it not, think you, great folly so to think? Even the like it is to thinke that true felicitie is to be found here in this wretched worlde. And for so much as in perfect felicitie is comprehended all goodness, and that the world (as saith St. John) is addicted and given to all evill, and subject to hunger, thirst, heat, cold, diseases, calamities, pride, ambition, covetousness, and voluptuousness, it is evident that those which here be living, supposing here to find true felicitie, are worse than fools, and voide of right reason. True felicitie is not without goodness and vertue, which cometh from God above. If it be so, why then is it not most wicked and presumptuous of man to think

that by a man's own industrie he is able to possess and enjoy the fair lot of true felicitie? therefore, every one that thinketh in this world hee may come to perfect felicitie and true blessedness, shall find in fine, as I found, for felicitie, vanitie—for good, evill.

# MORNING.—APRIL 4.

#### FOLLY OF ENVYING THE WICKED.

Lord, what a thoughtless wretch was I, To mourn, and murnur, and repine, To see the wicked plac'd on high, In pride and robes of honour shine.

But, O their end, their dreadful end! Thy sanctuary taught me so: On slipp'ry rocks I see them stand, And fiery billows roll below.

Now let them boast how tall they rise, I'll never envy them again, There they may stand with haughty eyes, Till they plunge deep in endless pain.

Now I esteem their mirth and wine, Too dear to purchase with my blood; Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine, My life, my portion, and my God.

Watts.

#### CHRIST'S PEACE NOT OF THE WORLD. LUKE XII.

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is

# THE CHRISTIAN MUST NOT HEED THE SCORN OF THE WORLD.

"Holy, holy, is the Lord God of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" Such is the song of the seraphim who surround the Omnipotent "in uncreated light;" and when we shall have passed "through the valley of the shadow of death," we may hope, as glorified spirits, to join in the hymn of the sacred host in heaven. That

elevating thought is well fitted to give the Christian, while here, a foretaste of celestial bliss. The Eternal will not be displeased with our efforts, humble as they may be, to worship him here. Alas! that our hearts, from being impure, cannot offer him nobler homage. Grief and self-reproach must press heavily upon us so often as we attempt to raise our thoughts to the fountain of all goodness. We feel that we presume -that we are not worthy to be admitted to the high privilege of addressing our God: but we also feel strengthened in mind, and more equal to the performance of a good action from making the attempt. Praying to thee with fervour, and binding ourselves more scrupulously to observe thy commandments, greatly relieves the oppressed bosom, and as among the children of men, intercourse with the more noble tends to ennoble the humble, even so, but in a greater degree, is the Christian exalted by daily communion with his God. The thought of his holiness is then deeply impressed on the supplicant's soul-it is filled with love at the thought that an All-seeing eye incessantly explores the inmost recesses of the heart, and with the consciousness of our own infirmity, we gain a lively image of the bounty and forbearance of our Lord.

For all the benefits which thy hand has unsparingly bestowed, we this morning desire to offer our warmest thanks. Contemplating these, our bosoms swell with gratitude, we feel eager to prove our love by keeping thy commandments, and wilfully we dare no longer wander.

In comparison with those gifts which thou hast in reserve, the world contains nothing that can be viewed as entitled to our anxious care. A rich man we know cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Riches rot, fine clothes become moth-eaten, and gold and silver will canker, rust, and waste away. Where riches are given, the possessors of them are not to think they are designed for their gratification alone. Such a thought, painful experience will soon refute; and he who dotes on wealth, will soon find himself poor in the midst of costly abundance. It can only be really enjoyed where the heart, awake to its duty, delights to make of it an acceptable offering on the altar of charity.

With this feeling, in a spirit of love for our brethren, Eternal Creator, we desire to appear before thee. Looking up to thee with confidence, thy grace we deem far, far, above the joys and treasures of this world. Strengthen then the

blissful conviction, and in the hour of tribulation, let it never depart from our hearts. Tried by painful visitations, grant that it may be our felicity to discover in the occurrences of our lives, proofs of thy marvellous wisdom, and loving care, that it may be ours, in word and in deed, to proclaim thy greatness and mercy to the children of men.

The folly of a scoffing world which mocks the forms of piety and religion, will henceforth, we trust, disturb our hearts no more. Shake our purpose it shall not, but weaning ourselves with determination from the folly of looking up to the doers of evil, we will wholly cease to heed the foolish derision of which we may know ourselves the object. Unworthy should we be of thy everlasting favour, and of acceptation by thee, through the merits of thy son, if in the cause of piety we could shrink, abashed, and discomfited by such assaults. Far above so pitiable a weakness it shall be ours to rise. Can we look to receive the crown of life from the Great Judge of all the earth, if foolishly—if meanly, we deny him before men. O, no; the thought is idle. Let us then be faithful to duty, and faint not, for what in the words of our Saviour "can it profit a man if he gain all the world, and lose his own soul?"

THE VAIN CENSURES OF MEN NOT TO BE REGARDED.

My son, repose thy soul upon God, cast all thy care there. and let it be thy great, thy only concern, to approve thyself to him. When this is done, a man should not much regard what the world thinks of him, nor fear the censures of others. while his own conscience bears testimony to his piety and innocence. To be ill thought of is sometimes for thy good; it conforms thee to the image of thy Saviour, and if thy soul like his be meek and humble, if thou seek not thy own glory, but his that sent thee, the affliction will not be very grievous to be born. The opinions of men are as many and as different as their persons; the greatest diligence, and most prudent conduct can never please them all. And therefore, even St. Paul himself, than whom none ever laboured more to recommend his actions to the good acceptance of the world. He who became all things to all men, yet found it necessary to appeal to a higher court, and declared it a small thing with him to be judged of man's judgment. He did his utmost to promote the interest and salvation of others, but even the utmost he could do was not sufficient to screen him from the wrongful censures, and perverse misconstructions of men. And therefore, he removed his cause, and referred the whole matter to that God who knew his integrity; and defended himself against the calumnies and reproaches of licentious tongues, with great humility and invincible patience. Sometimes he heard and passed their slanders by in silence: at other times he vindicated his own innocence, and reproved the unreasonable malice of his accusers; not so much in tenderness to his own honour, as to prevent any offence which might be taken from his forbearing to do so; and least the weak and ignorant should conclude, that too obstinate a silence was an argument of his guilt.

Thomas à Kempis.

# EVENING.—APRIL 4.

EARTH'S PLEASURES ARE POOR TO A CHRISTIAN MIND.

Earth, with all its gilded treasures, Cannot yield a moment's ease; Folly with her wanton pleasures, Now has lost her power to please.

Swelling streams of guilt surround thee, Like an overwhelming flood; Ah! poor sinner, haste and turn thee To a Saviour's cleansing blood.

See his agonizing features; See his pains endured for thee; See him bleed for rebel creatures, Groaning on the accursed tree.

Still perhaps he may be gracious; Still his mercy may forgive; Like the heaven so vast and spacious, Is the love which bids thee live.

Christian Retirement.

# BELIEVERS MUST NOT SEEK WORLDLY PLEASURES. 1 COR., X.

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in

the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for

they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

# THE CHRISTIAN WHO FIXES HIS THOUGHTS ON HEAVEN, WILL NOT BE FORSAKEN HERE.

God knows our folly! and awful is the thought—however great the weaknesses of our hearts may be, from him they cannot be concealed. But if we pray with earnestness to our Father, who is in heaven, and examine ourselves, we can detect our own errors. This is well, inasmuch as it is the first step to repentance. But unhappily, subjected to such a test, in our hearts we can find nothing but imperfection. The good resolutions which, from time to time, we have solemnly adopted—conscience strongly reproaches us for having forgotten or neglected. Duties formally assumed, have been left unperformed; that which ought to have been regarded as sacred, has been

carelessly performed—we have not loved our fellow-creatures as we are enjoined to do by God's holy law; and at times, while professing to approach the throne of grace, with a prayer on our lips, our hearts have been wandering among the idle vanities of life. We have often been carried away by the intoxication of passion, and have had at the close of day, only to reprove and lament the actions and feelings, which had been experienced during its progress.

Even in the day which now approaches its termination, our conduct has not been free from reproach. We have failed to be what Christians ought to be; our duties, such of them as have not been forgotten, have been performed with reluctance; our thoughts have wandered from thee, and yielding to the influence of worldly impressions, we have been in succession, impatient, pusillanimous, and ungrateful. We have dared to murmur at thy decrees, instead of humbly bowing before thy awful throne, wholly resigned to what it may have been thy good pleasure to ordain.

O, that true wisdom might elevate our thoughts, and illuminate our minds! Then should we no longer seek in vain for that peace which the world cannot take away, and life would be past in constant enjoyment, being cheered by holy confidence in thee. While that is not the case, we must continue to mourn that our faith in God is

not perfect.

In our days, regarding ourselves as pilgrims on the road of life, we may rejoice that such painful observances are not required of us, which the folly of those who were deemed wise in their generation, wished to impose on Christians of former days. Weary journeyings through strange lands, self-inflicted penances, and the martyr's fate, are not now constantly before our eyes. The reign of frantic bigotry is at an end, and not by such paths have we to seek salvation. A pure heart and a careful observance of the law of the Lord, are all that heaven requires.

Yet, forsake us not, oh merciful God! Enlighten our darkness, and breathe comfort on our souls. Enable us to burst the trammels of that folly by which we have been too long enthralled. To whom but thee can we apply with confidence, for pity and assistance, all gracious Parent. Thy powerful assistance we now invoke, and already we feel soothed, being permitted to implore thy favour. Even while we complain to thee of our weakness, we feel new strength. Past sorrows, we trust,

will return to us in like force no more; we have again confidence in ourselves from gaining just confidence in thee.

No more shall pusillanimous doubts overwhelm with despondency. Our attention fixed henceforth on imperishable things, we will not despair of salvation. The dignity of our future destiny shall be ever borne in mind—and lively visions of that eternal happiness which is promised to thy faithful worshippers, shall cheer us unceasingly through the remainder of our days. They will render our spirits capable of nobler—of sublimer flights; give us new courage and unfailing support. Though all men should in hatred assail thy trusting servants, thy love will not fail them—thou wilt not forsake them, oh God!

#### THE FOLLY OF EARTHLY CRAVINGS.

People imagine they should be happy in circumstances which they would find insupportably burthensome in less than a week. A man that has been clothed in fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, envies the peasant under a thatched hovel: who, in return, envies him as much as his palace and his pleasure-ground. Could they change situations, the fine gentleman would find his ceilings were too low, and that his casements admitted too much wind; that he had no cellar for his wine, and no wine to put in his cellar. These, with a thousand other mortifying deficiencies, would shatter his romantic project into innumerable fragments in a moment. The clown, at the same time, would find the accession of so much unwieldy treasure an incumbrance quite incompatible with an hour's ease. His choice would be puzzled by variety. He would drink to excess, because he would foresee no end of his abundance; and he would eat himself sick for the same reason. He would have no idea of any other happiness than sensual gratification; would make himself a beast, and die of his good fortune. The rich gentleman had, perhaps, or might have had, if he pleased, at the shortest notice, just such a recess as this; but if he had it, he overlooked it, or, if he had it not, forgot that he might command it whenever he would. The rustic, too, was actually in possession of some blessings, which he was a fool to relinquish, but which he could neither see nor feel, because he had the daily and constant use of them; such as good health, bodily strength, a head and a heart that never ached, and temperance, to the practice of which he was bound by necessity, that, humanly speaking, was a pledge and a security for the continuance of them all

# MORNING.—APRIL 5.

FAITH ASKED FROM ABOVE.

Give me the faith which can remove
And sink the mountain to a plain;
Give me the child-like praying love,
Which longs to build thy house again.
Thy love, let it my heart o'erpower,
And all my simple soul devour.

I would the precious time redeem,
And longer live for this alone;
To spend, and to be spent for them
Who have not yet my Saviour known;
Fully on these my mission prove,
And only breathe, to breathe thy love.

My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord, Into thy blessed hands receive; And let me live to preach thy word, And let me to thy glory live; My every sacred moment spend, In publishing the sinner's Friend!

Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart,
With boundless charity divine!
So shall I all my strength exert,
And love them with a zeal like thine;
And lead them to thy open side,
The sheep for whom their Shepherd died.

Wesley.

WE SHOULD GROW IN LOVE, AND HOLD IT GAIN TO DIE
IN CHRIST. PHIL. I.

9 This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;
11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are

by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the

things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will.

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the

defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding every way whether in

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

# TRUE PIETY SHEWS ITSELF BY WILLING OBEDIENCE TO GOD, AND BENEVOLENCE TO MAN.

We learn from the Bible, that, in the eye of God, obedience to his commandments is better than sacrifice. That should not be forgotten, while we are assisting at divine worship, in order that our prayers may prove acceptable to the Supreme Being. Contemptible, if not guilty, we

appear, if kneeling before the all-seeing one, we worship him with our lips only, and not with our hearts. We desire to offer to thee, O God! our thanks for the gift of pious love. By that we feel sustained and comforted, so often as we raise our hearts to thank thee, for all that thou hast done for us, since it was thy pleasure that we should first see the light of heaven. Our love seeks to offer thee the tribute of its gratitude for the faith we have in a blessed Redeemer, and from the joyful confidence we feel in thy paternal goodness, based, as it is, on the mighty sacrifice made by thy Son, that man might be saved.

Miserable and hopeless would be our condition, did we not know thee, and him whom thou hast sent to the world to save it. But for his precepts and example, what could save our weakness, when assaulted by temptation? We ought to be deeply sensible of all thy mercies, and pray to thee in all sincerity and love. What peace could we know, did we not feel and see how good thou art? What but that could give us present comfort, or future hope? Oh! let our hearts ever join to worship thee, with fervour and with love—a living love, which pants to render joyful obedience to thy will.

The obedience to God's will, which aims to forward the advancement of his kingdom on earth, is to the Most High more acceptable than sacrifice. No more shall that ferocious zeal prevail, which, professing to seek his honour, destroyed his image here below, and deluged the world with blood. It is not thus, that our God—that a God of mercy is to be worshipped.

There was a time when men, reputed to be holy, took upon themselves to curse their fellowmen, in the name of their Creator. This unhallowed rage, that presumed to launch the thunder of heaven on those who differed from certain dogmas, is now less frequently heard of. We pray that rancour among Christians may be henceforth unknown. Let us evince our love of God, by charity to man; and by keeping his commandments, render our offerings acceptable to him. We will endeavour to do this, with hearts overflowing with gratitude. By works of real philanthropy, the Christian must aim at giving effect to God's laws, and by submitting to the decrees of Providence with perfect resignation. Oh! may the Holy Spirit of our Eternal Father enable us to do this, henceforth and for ever!

#### LOVE IDENTIFIED WITH RELIGION.

The spirit of Christ sweetly calms the soul of a suffering believer, not by taking away all sense of pain, but by overcoming it with the sense of his love.

Gurnall.

Do Christ this one favour, for all his love to thee: love all his saints; even the poorest, the meanest, and the weakest, notwithstanding some slight differences in judgment. As the names of the children of Israel were graven on Aaron's breastplate; so are the names of all God's saints, engraven on the heart of Christ. Let them be likewise so on thine. Wilcox.

Every man can love his friend; but only a godly man can love his enemy.

Parr.

It was a notable saying of an holy man, "Quench hell and burn heaven, yet will I love and fear my God." Dodd.

Other lovers, beside Christ, are in suit of you, and your soul hath many wooers: but let your soul be a chaste virgin, and love but one. Most worthy is Christ alone, of all your love, were your love higher than heaven and broader than the whole world.

Proportionable to the renovation of the image of God, and the likeness of God upon our souls, is our love to Jesus Christ.

Owen.

When we love God most, our duties run on the most freely and sweetly: and when our thoughts are most steeped in the love of God to us, we are then most likely to love him abundantly in return.

Manton.

# EVENING.—APRIL 5.

GOD'S PEOPLE SAVED FROM EVIL BY THE LAMB

Awake, sweet harp of Judah, wake, Retune thy strings for Jesu's sake; We sing the Saviour of our race, The Lamb, our shield, and hiding-place.

When God's right arm is bared for war, The thunders clothe his cloudy car. Where, where, oh where, shall man retire, To 'scape the horrors of his ire?

'Tis He, the Lamb, to him we fly, While the dread tempest passes by; God sees his well-beloved's face, And spares us in his hiding-place.

Thus, while we dwell in this low scene, The Lamb is our unfailing screen; To him, though guilty, still we run, And God still spares us for his Son.

Kirke White.

GOD WILL SPEAK PEACE TO HIS PEOPLE. PSALM LXXXV.

1 Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger.

4 Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may re-

joice in thee?

Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation. 8 I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that

glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good: and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps.

GOD'S DISPENSATIONS, THOUGH MYSTERIOUS, ARE NOT TO BE QUESTIONED BY MAN.

"What I do, thou knowest not now," Peter was told by Christ. To us the like speech might be appositely addressed, where the ways of the Almighty are mysteriously veiled, and nations and individuals are thrown, by passing events, into a state of thrilling alarm. It is, however, for the Christian, in such circumstances, to say, "Though I may not know what it is the pleasure of the Lord to do, yet I know by whose wise care all things are governed, and it is not for me to sink in weak despondency, or peevishly to murmur at what he may ordain. If it be his pleasure that eventful scenes shall be known, he will, in his own time, deliver his children from evil." The immediate purpose of the great Arbiter of all, we, who are merely men, cannot pretend to penetrate, under any circumstances, much less while our mental vision is clouded by care and discontent.

When our spirits are depressed, and our fears excited, we are inclined to regard all things with some degree of suspicion. We consider that we are wronged, and think injustice and wickedness prevail everywhere in this world. We cannot but admit that the injuries we have received, and the fears consequent upon them which disturb our minds, tempt us, in some moments, to doubt the wisdom, the justice, and the benevolence of divine Providence. We are restless and alarmed, because we know not what the Lord is doing now. Yet, thus to feel, is not that which reason can approve. Surely in us it would be the height of folly, to suppose that the Lord can commit a fault. Can we rationally suppose that he will permit changes to occur, which are incompatible

with the well-being of the human race? Can he permit the powers of darkness to prevail, to interfere with man's salvation, and doom the children of his care to everlasting misery? Far be from us a thought so affronting to the majesty of God. He will not cease to be bountiful; he will overlook nothing that is of importance to our happiness; and, the same vesterday, to-day, and for ever, our Lord is not a Deity weakly to change

his purpose, nor fail in his promises.

While indulging these reflections, we revive from that stupor into which we had been thrown by wild apprehension, caused by events for which, weak as we are, our minds were not prepared. We recollect that we have no claim on the Allwise, that he should submit his decrees to our judgment. We cannot presume so far as to imagine that our feeble understandings are capable of comprehending his vast designs; but when we take a retrospective glance, whether we look at what has been witnessed during our own lives, or take the more extended view of facts which histories of ancient date record, everywhere we can trace the working of a master hand, the influence of a wise Almighty Being, ordering all things for the best, and causing even the wildest excesses of wicked men, and the most awful abominations, to prove the source of good.

Is it not for us to place all our trust in such a God? We know his intentions are gracious, as we know his means are infinite. Oh! then, let us, with care and all humility, but with perfect confidence, be prepared to say, "He has done all things well. Praise and glory to his holy name

for ever!"

#### EFFECTS OF THE SAVING GRACE OF GOD.

Before I had considered the grace of God, I was afraid of my own convictions. I durst not scrape too deep in that dunghill, which lay before my door: there was enough already apparent, that I knew not well what to do with. But the general consideration of the grace and mercy of God encouraged me to look farther. I thought thus: there is a remedy to be had, let things be as bad as bad can be; there is a physician, and many promises of pardon and assistance. Whence I concluded, that I might safely venture to know the worst of myself.

I was convinced, I could be saved no other way, but by grace, if I could but find grace enough: but, at that time, I saw more in my own sin, than in God's mercy. But this put me on a further inquiry after the grace of God, because my life lay upon it: and thus I was brought to the gospel.

"When I came to the gospel, I met with the law in it: i. e. I was for turning the gospel into law. I began to settle myself upon gospel duties, as repentance, humiliation, believing, praying, &c. And, I know not how, forgot the promise of grace, which first brought me to the gospel. But as I had



# CRYSTAL PALACE DELINEATED.

#### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

This work promises to be one of the cheapest, and at the same time the most beautiful memorial of the gorgeous festival of art and civilization held in Loudon in 1851. Every admirer of what is elegant and useful should possess a copy of this work, which will be in itself a perpetual exhibition. This number has six embellishments, executed in the most finished manner, and contains sixteen pages of closely printed quarto.—Mark Lame Express.

This work is said to have been long in preparation; and to judge from its commencing part, it promises to become one of the best of the many publications devoted to the history of the Great Industrial Exhibition of 1851, and to a description of the contents of the Crystal Palace. The writing is good, and the engravings are ably executed. The objects represented are from the drawings in daguerreotype of Beard, Mayall, &c.—Waval and Military Gazette, June 19, 1852.

This new serial proposes to give a full history and description of the Crystal Palace, and no expense has been spared in rendering it as attractive as possible by beautiful steel engravings.—Weekly Times.

There appears the first number of a new and gorgeously illustrated work on the Crystal Palace, suitably accompanied by explanatory letter-press; and now that its [the building's] doom is sealed, we have no doubt but that a work commemorative of this sumptuous, though condemned edifice, will be gladly received by thousands.—Dispatch.

This publication is decidedly the finest, in decorative art, to which the greatest wonder of the world (as the Crystal Palace will always be considered) has given rise. The Messrs, Tallis, with the utmost taste, judgment, and liberality, have produced a work, or rather the commencement of one, that will do honour to the country as well as to themselves. It is printed in demy quarto, on a fine paper, and excellent reading type. Each part is to contain from eight to sixteen pages of letter-press, and three quarto steel plates, containing from four to six gems fro a record of its origin, progress, and demolition. Messrs. Tallis present the desideratum in its cheapest but most tasteful form. Hampshire Advertiser.

This is a new quarto work, beautifully printed, and illustrated with steel engravings, intended as a memento of the Crystal Palace.

A more beautiful work we have rarely seen; and the descriptive portion, we are told, is from the pen of a gentleman already favourably known to the public for his sound views of art and purity of criticism. In the present number we have the Arms of all Nations printed in gold, crimson, and purple; a splendid engraving of the Crystal Palace; and several engravings of the statues. We cordially recommend this work to public attention, because we are sure that a cheaper shilling's-worth was never issued from the press.—

Cambridge Independent Press, June 12, 1852.

recommend this work to public attention, because we are sure that a cheaper shilling's-worth was never issued from the press.—
Cambridge Independent Press, June 12, 1852.

The Crystal Palace Described and Illustrated, chiefly by Daguerrectypes, promises to be a work of world-wide popularity. It is to be "not a record only, but a representation of those magnificent objects which at every turn delighted or startled the spectator in that seeming palace of enchantments;" and is offered at a cost to suit all buyers of books.—Oxford University Heradd.

The engraver has most ably executed his portion of the task, and the plates present splendid specimens of art, worthy indeed of the collection" which this work is intended to perpetuate. The publishers are to be commended for the liberal spirit they have displayed; and the rare character of the work merits the most extended support.—Plymouth and Devonport Heradd.

This beautiful work is dedicated to Prince Albert, and is worthy of his patronage. The Exhibition of 1851 is beautifully illustrated by steel engravings, from daguerrectypes by Beard, Mayall, &c. The first illustration is the Arms of all Nations; the next is the Great Exhibition Building, and a very neat model it is; then follow Prince Albert, her Majesty, and the Happy and Unhappy Child. The literature is equal to the engravings, and both are perfect.—Glasgow Examiner, June 19, 1852.

The Crystal Palace, Described and Illustration, is a new publication by Messrs. Tallis and Co., of which this is the first part. It contains a good account of the origin and history of the Exhibition, but it will be for the illustrations with which the letter-press is accompanied that this work will be chiefly valued. These are taken from daguerrectypes, and will therefore be admired as much for their fidelity as their beautiful execution. The specimens in this part are certainly everything that could be desired, and there is no doubt that this will be one of the most valuable and interesting records which has yet appeared of t

Another production of the same spirited publishers, forming, as far as we can judge from the part now before us, a most appropriate and efficient memorial of the Palace and its contents.—Poole Herald.

Should the succeeding parts of this very beautiful publication come up to the one under notice, it will form, when completed, perhaps, the cheapest and most elegant souvenir of the Exhibition of the World's Industry in 1851 hitherto published. It is well worthy of a place on the drawing-room table, and its exceeding cheapness places it within the reach of everybody. - Gloucester Chronicle.

worthy of a place on the drawing-room table, and its exceeding cheapness places it within the reach of everybody.—Glouester Chronicle.

This is another, among the almost countless publications, having for its object the illustration and history of the World's Fair, of 1851. The illustrations are from daguerreotypes, taken in the Crystal Palace, and consist of splendidly executed steel engravings. The pen has been wielded as effectively as the pencil, and notwithstanding its numerous competitors, we doubt not that the superiority of Messrs. Tallis's work will insure for it a foremost place in public estimation.—Port of Portsmouth Guardian, June 16, 1852.

This, although late in the field, promises to be the most complete of the many illustrated works descriptive of this famed Exhibition. It founds its claims on the superior excellence of the engravings, having been all taken by daguerreotype, and executed by first-

rate artists .- Perthshire Courier.

toon. It founds its clams on the superior excellence of the engravings, naving been all taken by dagelereotype, and executed by instructional rate artists.—Perthability Courier.

The idea proposed to be worked out in this publication, that of giving pictorial representations of the objects of art and virtue collected in the Crystal Palace, ensuring fidelity by the application of the daguerreotype, is a good one; and as the illustrations are to be accompanied by a history of the rise and progress of the Great Exhibition, and a description of the most remarkable of its multiparties of the complex of the publishers.—The first number contains half a dozen illustrations on steel, together with several pages of letterpress, and is highly creditable to the spirit and liberality of the publishers.—Salisbury and Wiltshire Journal, June 5, 1852.

We admire and sincerely recommend this work to the attention of our readers, because its pages contain a clear, comprehensive, and inspartial history and description of the Crystal Palace, and the Exhibition of the World's Industry in 1851; illustrated by beautiful steel engravings, from original drawings and daguerreotypes by Beard, Mayall, &c. Messrs. Tallis deserve great praise for their exertions, and we hope every lover of his country will not be without a copy, more especially as its cheapness places it within the reach of even the humbler classes.—Somerster County Herald, June 19, 1852.

Of all the legion of beautiful works to which the wonderful Crystal Palace has given birth, that of which the first part only is before us, promises to be one of the most beautiful. The frontispiece is a tastefully arranged group of the arms of all nations from an enamed by Buss (exhibited in the Crystal Palace). Next we have a faithful view of the exterior of the noble Palace itself, from a finely before us, promises to be one of the most beautiful. The frontispiece is a tastefully arranged group of the arms of all nations from a enamed by Buss (exhibited in the Crystal Palace). Next we

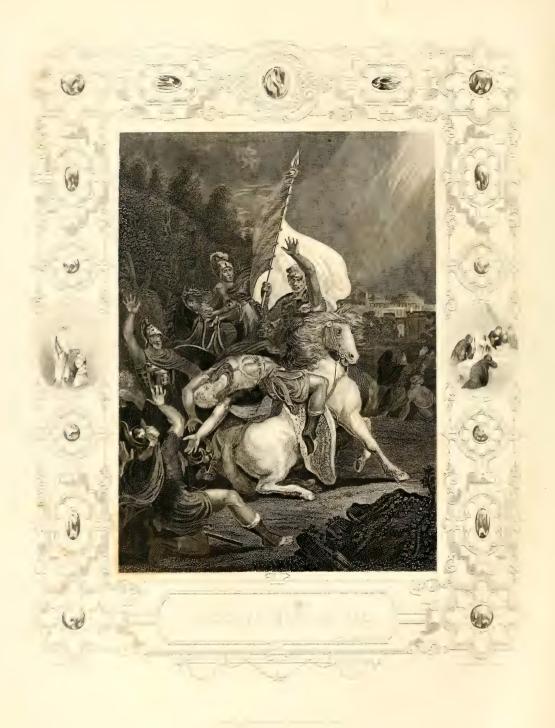
11



CHILAND











before found, that I could not answer the strictness of the law, because my duties fell short of the rule; so I came to discover, that I could not answer the spirituality of the gospel, for I pressed after acts of grace upon a legal footing; making works of them all. I found I could neither believe, nor pray,

as the gospel required.

While I was in this plunge, it pleased the Lord to direct me to study the person of Christ: whom I looked on as the great undertaker in the work of man's salvation. And, truly, here I may say, according to my measure, as Paul did, "it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." God overcame my heart with this. I saw so much mercy in his mercy, so much love in his love, so much grace in his grace, that I knew not what to liken it to. And here my heart broke, I knew

Belief of salvation must be grounded on some inward transaction between Christ and the soul. I began to consider, whether any such thing had passed between Christ and me: and, while I was looking this way, the Lord Jesus drew me; and took hold of me, in raising me up to a sensible reliance on him.

# MORNING.—APRIL 6.

GO BOLDLY FORTH.

My soul, go, boldly forth, Forsake this sinful earth. What hath it been to thee But pain and sorrow, And thinkest thou it will be Better to-morrow?

Love not this darksome womb, Nor yet a gilded tomb, Though on it written be Mortal men's story: Look up by faith, and see Sure, joyful glory.

Why art thou for delay? Thou cam'st not here to stay: What tak'st thou for thy part, But heav'nly pleasure Where then should be thy heart, But where's thy treasure?

Thy God; thy head's above; There is the world of love; Mansions there purchas'd are. By Christ's own merit. For these he doth prepare Thee by his Spirit.

Barter.

SEEK THE BREAD OF LIFE. JOHN VI.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou

then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from

heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this 35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he

that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

# COURAGE REQUISITE TO THE CHRISTIAN CHAMPION.

"Fight the good fight," Paul wrote to Timothy. It will thus be seen that the apostle likened the life of a true Christian to a constant fight. So we find it in our own case. Every day that opens upon us, calls us to new strife. We are required to contend with the trials, temptations, and burdens of life. Thanks be to God, in this fearful warfare, we are not left to depend alone on our unassisted strength. He is our shield-he grants us his potent aid; and so favoured, from day to day we find that we acquire new strength -and victory succeeds to victory, till our lives become purer, and more glorious than ever.

Yet we cannot but remember with confusion and regret, that there have been moments when our courage has failed us in the battle. To thee, oh God! it is known; for to thy eye, the weakness of a corrupted, deceitful, and wicked heart. must ever be exposed. Thou hast seen its fickleness and indolence. Have mercy, O Lord, on thy weak and dispirited children! Even while we raise this cry, we have to acknowledge that. to us, thy mercy has already been wonderfully extended, seeing thou hast not disdained to send to us thy son; and in him we have all we can desire to secure our final triumph. Thy Holy Spirit will not be withheld, if we sincerely pray that it may descend upon us.

When we seek to raise our thoughts to thee, would that our prayers were always breathed with the fervour and earnestness which become thy worshippers, and could thus prove that we are of the number of those whom Christ names among the blessed; who are eager for salvation, and who "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Too

often we find in ourselves coldness and indifference: and but seldom a lively zeal and undaunted courage, to "fight the good fight." We, indeed, strive to repel the temptations of the world, and the lusts and desires of our own hearts; but it is a fight in which our resolution often fails; our perseverance gives way, and we mourn that we are vanquished.

We humbly beseech that thy arm may again be stretched forth, to save us from perdition. Grant us new courage to resume and to continue the combat. Let us bear in mind, to strive resolutely is our duty, and the important prize for which we contend, is no less than the boon of everlast-

ing life.

The greatness of that to which we aspire, ought to wake in us proportionate energy, while engaged in its pursuit. If Paul rejoiced in Christ's passion and death, and in his own persecution, why should we not rejoice in the comparatively easy trials which come within the limits of our experience? It shall be our study so to feel; and from this day forward, we look to become better champions of the faith than we have hitherto been found, and so doing, we must be on our guard, lest some other duty should be neglected. Assist our purpose, Oh thou! who lookest down upon us from thy throne in heaven! Assist us, O Lord! small as our claim is to such benefit, after having neglected thee so often. Do not remember the errors and transgressions of our past lives, spent in dreaming folly and culpable idleness. We desire now to awake to the value and importance of the fleeting moments which remain to us, that we may at length cease to fail in our duty, and become thy true and unflinching servants.

The strength and the capacity which on us it has been thy good pleasure to bestow, we now, though late, desire wisely to employ. Direct us in all our doings, that we may apply our powers to their proper uses, and grant that to us in the days which are to come, they may prove real blessings. The strife to which we have long been committed, is not yet at an end, and many may be the occasions in which we shall want all the powerful aid thy gracious kindness can supply. Grant us then the courage and the willing heart to exert ourselves as true soldiers of the cross should do in a moment so important. Enable us rigorously to resist infidelity, injustice, voluptuousness, and distrust, in thee. Feeble in ourselves, on thy grace we place our reliance. Oh! let us not call on

our Lord in vain!

With all humility we entreat, that favoured by thy Holy Spirit, all our future days, may give evidence by good deeds—that we are sincerely intent on gaining that crown of life which we hope it will be ours to inherit. Not for an extended earthly existence do we entreat thee, O Father of the universe; but that the days it is thy will to grant us, we may wisely employ-that as we proceed, our good deeds may increase, and with them our hopes of immortality. He who worships God by proving that he is no stranger to charity, where the interests of his fellow-men are concerned, and applies himself to perform good deeds, he alone can at the end of his days, rejoice in the thought that he has lived —and that his days have been many.

### SALVATION FOR ALL WHO FEAR GOD.

He that required the word to be first preached to the Jews (on which it became necessary it should be so), the same commanded, on their rejecting of it, that it should be preached to the Gentiles. After the resurrection of Christ, the commission was general, allowing and requiring, as far as opportunity could be had, that the gospel be preached to every human creature. But yet these opportunities and calls for it, are under the direction and disposal of Providence. The actual enjoyment of the gospel is not universal, but as Christ is pleased to send it. 'Tis not from the deservings of any more than others that they have it. Though where it is bestowed, it is not taken away again without their forfeiture and undeservings. Christ holds the stars (that is, his ministers) in his right hand, not only for their safety and preservation, but also for their disposal and mission. He sends out and places these lights, as he pleases. When St. Paul and his companions had gone throughout Phrygia and Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia (viz., at that time, for afterwards they did), after they were come to Mysia, they essayed to go into Bithynia, but the spirit suffered them not. The journeyings as well as teachings of Christ's apostles, were under the direction of his spirit. Passing by Mysia, they came to Troas, and there St. Paul in a vision is invited by one of Macedonia, to come thither, and help them, as according he did, gathering that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel there. 'Tis true, that way and instance of direction was extraordinary; but we see by it, a providence there is, in the disposal of the gospel, it does not go and come by chance; that this or that nation hath it, and another not, is by Christ's disposal. Children of the stock of Abraham, whoever among you feareth God, to you (said Paul) is the word of salvation sent.

Jeremiah Smith.

### EVENING.—APRIL 6.

GOD'S ALL CONSOLING GOODNESS.

Amid the anguish and the strife That shrinking nature fears, Look gently down, great Source of life. And dry death's starting tears!

Serene, like Jacob, we would die, And "gather up our feet;" Would chide the lingering hours, and fly Our Saviour God to meet.

Our dearest comforts we could leave,
With glory in our eyes;
Would wipe the tears of those that grieve,
And point them to the skies.

Our trembling lips, if Thou art nigh,
When life's sad hours are few,
With joy shall say—"Behold we die,
But God shall be with you."

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

# THE HUNGRY ARE FED BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE. JOHN VI.

5 ¶ When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what

ne would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him.

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place, so the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve oaskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

#### COMFORT FOR THE CHRISTIAN MOURNER.

From Bethany a mournful cry Arose to greet our Lord, That Lazarus, his friend, must die But for the Saviour's word.

To him the weeping sister came, Her soul oppressed with grief; Yet nursing hope's expiring flame That he would give relief.

His presence seemed to calm her care, Though bitterly she cried, Lord, if thou had'st been with us here, My brother had not died.

Now must her sorrow banish'd be Her prayer was not in vain— The Saviour speaks! Lo, thou shalt see Thy brother rise again. Before him meekly bending low, We hear the mourner say, In simple faith, O Lord, I know That at the last great day

He who is gone again will rise, The bonds of death cast by, And dwell with thee above the skies In Immortality.—

I know that my Redeemer lives, And on the earth shall stand; I feel that He my brother gives A place at His right hand

O Christian mourner, comfort take, Nor let regret be heard; Let Martha's faith your own awake, To trust a Saviour's word.

Though gone to their eternal home, Your lov'd ones do but sleep; The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, Through Jordan's water deep.

Miranda.

EVEN IN SADNESS, GOD'S GOODNESS NOT TO BE QUESTIONED.

Cruel men had deprived them of their Lord and master, and doubt and sadness had come over the disciples who had just seen his cold remains consigned to the grave; when journeying to Emmaus, they met one on their road, to whom they spoke on that mournful subject which occupied all their thoughts. They told that Jesus had been put to death, and sorrowfully added— "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Their hopes were mournfully blighted by what had occurred, and so we often find our hopes grievously disappointed; our spirits sinking beneath excessive pain, and give ourselves up to moody discontent and fretful repinings, and persuade ourselves that for these we are not open to censure. Reflection, however. cannot fail to suggest that we ought not to be incessantly looking out for that of which we may complain, forgetful of the various benefits still ours, which have been bestowed by the loving kindness of our God. We have but to turn our eves to the scenes of affliction and mourning, which are to be found in other houses, to feel that, compared with many, our lot is enviable. What are the hardships we have to lament by the side of those which are experienced by many, who, while infirm in body, are in destitute circumstances. Their sufferings are obviously, infinitely greater then ours; and dare we affirm that we, in

our lives, are better; nay, that we are not worse than them?

If such is the case, ought we not to feel, with shame and confusion, that much as we have dared to murmur, Providence has bestowed upon us a degree of kindness and favour which we have not merited?

Have we acknowledged such kindness with thoughts of corresponding gratitude? In happier days, did we look up to the Eternal with grateful devout exultation; in days of sorrow have we had faith in his benevolence, to believe that all was for the best? Such has not been our course. We confess it with grief and penitence; we have in the former position been forgetful of thy bounty. and in the latter, complained with bitterness of heart of thy severe visitations. Dispirited and disheartened, we neither admitted thy justice, nor looked forward with hope to thy mercy.

And still, as we recal the past, we discover new proofs of our own unworthiness. We have never made that wise use of the blessings it has been thy good pleasure to grant, that might have given us happiness, and tended to thy glory. this day, while many sources of rational enjoyment remain within our reach, many refreshing comforts invite us to be glad, and many important alleviations are supplied to the toils and cares of life; all have been coldly regarded, weakly neglected, or foolishly spurned. In the fits of discontent which we have known, while murmuring for comforts withdrawn, we have ceased to appreciate the value of what remained. With the frowardness of a peevish child who refuses his offered food, we have scorned to look at benefits which we might yet have realised, and omitted to secure happiness still offered for our solace. and it was only when the opportunity was lost by our blindness and ingratitude, that we became awake to its value and importance.

Sinfully reprehensible, as we have been, thy mercy forbore to punish according to our misdeeds, and still hast thou brought us back, by a way which we could not have imagined, to scenes of tranquillity and paths of peace. Works of thy kindness have not been withheld; nor have we been visited with those pains which might justly have requited our evil doings. Great, O God, has been thy mercy! The recollection of it shall wake in us a true spirit of repentance, and lead us to reform our lives.

Past errors, it shall be our care not to repeat.

again be seen in us, when we experience grief and affliction, because relief is not momentarily forthcoming to abate our pains. All the good, O Lord! which thou art pleased to permit us to know, shall be gratefully acknowledged. It will be our earnest endeavour to appreciate the varied advantages of our position. In days of mourning we will thankfully recal those of joy which we have known, and with loving confidence, anticipate others yet to come. Whatever clouds and darkness it may be ours to look upon, we will regard no day as one of unmixed evil. Though such it may seem, our impression shall be, that it will lead to good. So shall our hearts retain that peace, which is in itself a treasure. Sinful repinings, and tormenting apprehensions, shall be dismissed, and with perfect confidence we will rely on the eternal benevolence of our Creator, the wise, the omnipotent, the good

# MORNING.—APRIL 7.

#### THE LAST DAY

That day of wrath, that dreadful day, When heaven and earth shall pass away-What power shall be the sinner's stay? How shall he meet that dreadful day?

When shriveling like a parched scroll, The flaming heavens together roll; When louder yet, and yet more dread, Swells the high trump that wakes the dead;

Oh! on that day-that awful day When man to judgment wakes from clay, Be Thou the trembling sinner's stay, Though heaven and earth shall pass away.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

BE MINDFUL OF GOD'S COVENANT. I. CHRON. XVI.

1 They brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.

2 And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the

name of the Lord.

3 And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

4 ¶ And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and to praise

the Lord God of Israel:

5 Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Weak despondency, we humbly trust, will not Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and

Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;

6 Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets con-

tinually before the ark of the covenant of God.

7 Then on that day David delivered this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. 8 Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make

known his deeds among the people.

9 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seck the Lord.

.1 Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.

12 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his

wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.

13 O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones.

14 He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

15 Be ye always mindful of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

#### THE CHRISTIAN WILL NOT SEEK GOD IN VAIN.

We read in scripture, that every man shall receive his reward. He shall receive it, it is understood, partly here, but in its fullest extent in another state of being. This announcement would cause us to look forward with trembling anxiety to the hour in which judgment must be pronounced upon us, were we not consoled and reassured by the knowledge of the sacrifice made for our redemption, by that Saviour who is now interceding for us, with his immortal and almighty Father. Resting upon his gracious promises, we can repose in peace.

To thee, great Redeemer of the world, who hast reconciled sinful man to a justly offended God, we desire to fly, from the vanities of life. May we hope, that in that blessed reconciliation, we can claim a share? Have we given an appropriate welcome to the solemn and important exhortation, "Be ye reconciled to God?" Happy would it be for us, did our consciences testify that we have earnestly sought that reconciliation, by devoting ourselves wholly to Jesus; by sincere penitence, resolute self-denial, and fervent prayer.

The Christian who wishes to be reconciled to his Creator, will be disposed to exclaim with Job, "O! that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat;" and, breathing such a wish from the heart, it is not too much to expect that he will not seek the Lord in vain. His solemn musings will bring the glory of the Deity before him. The firmament above, the variegated landscape, the fruitful field, the majestic mountain, the smiling valley, the boundless ocean, and the rippling stream, all image the greatness and the goodness of the Author of the universe, and tell the devout worshipper, that He who fills all space, can never be sought by his creatures in vain.

To obtain his approving smile, it is not enough that we recognise his power. While we acknowledge his bounty, let us ask ourselves this question,—Do we cultivate within ourselves those feelings of good will to others, which ought to be ours?-do we endeavour to arm ourselves against the sinfulness, the vanities and the guile of the world? Are we of the number of those who, faithful to the Saviour they aspire to follow, do good unceasingly, yet still, with becoming diffidence, regard themselves as unprofitable servants; doubt if they have any claim to eternal happiness, and hold that their best efforts at virtue fall far short of rendering them worthy of the promised grace of God? May the thought of thy judgment, O Lord! the recollection of the account to which we must one day be called, ever remain with us, and have a proper influence on our hearts.

The day of judgment—that day when the graves must give up their dead, shall always be kept before our eyes. In the awful anticipation of its certain approach, our hearts should be zealously and incessantly employed in doing good. The moment in which we shall be called before the bar of God, may arrive sooner than we anticipate; the present day may be that on which the all-important decision, whether eternal felicity or irreparable perdition shall be ours, will be made. If still distant the day of judgment, our death may be at hand.

Duly moved by this startling reflection, let each say to himself, "Be watchful, and be sober, Oh my soul! When-such being the mandate of the Most High,-thy dying day approaches, all thy efforts to postpone it, or to escape from it, must prove of no avail." It is decreed that man shall die, and after death be brought to judgment. Already-how solemn is the thought !- the Omnipotent Lord of all may be about to pronounce the dread sentence. Let us, then, watch and pray, warned as we are of the situation in which we stand, and that the Lord is come. Let us, on this great occasion, prepare to meet him, with no common care. Let works of charity, which in scripture we are taught may cover a multitude of sins, claim our constant attention. By bountifully

relieving our indigent fellow-creatures, by watching, prayer, and true repentance, we may yet render ourselves acceptable in his sight, and "God, even our own God, will grant us his blessing."

LET THE SINNER BE MERCIFUL TO HIMSELF.

Will you cry to God for mercy? Why, God calleth upon you to have mercy upon yourselves, and you will not. Ministers see the poisoned cup in the drunkard's hand, and tell him there is poison in it, and desire him to have mercy upon his soul, and forbear, and he will not hear us; drink it he must and will; he loves it, and therefore, though hell comes next, he saith he cannot help it. What should one say to such men as these? We tell the ungodly, careless worldling, "It is not such a life that will serve the turn, or ever bring you to heaven. If a bear were at your back, you would mend your pace; and when the curse of God is at your back, and Satan and hell are at your back, will you not stir, but ask, What needs all this ado? Is an immortal soul of no more worth? O have mercy upon yourselves!" But they will have no mercy on themselves, nor once regard us. We tell them the end will be bitter: who can dwell with the everlasting fire? And yet they will have no mercy on themselves. And yet will these shameless wretches say, that God is more merciful than to condemn them; when it is themselves that cruelly and unmercifully run upon condemnation: and if we should go to them with our hats in our hands, and entreat them, we cannot stop them; if we should fall on our knees to them, we cannot stop them; but to hell they will go, and yet will they not believe that they are going thither. If we beg of them for the sake of God that made them, and preserveth them: for the sake of Christ that died for them; for the sake of their own poor souls, to pity themselves, and go no further in the way to hell, but come to Christ while his arms are open, and enter into the state of life while the door stands open, and now take mercy while mercy may be had: they will not be persuaded. If we should die for it, we cannot get them so much as now and then to think of the matter, and to turn; and yet they can say, I hope God will be merciful. Did you never consider what he saith? "It is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them: and he that formed them will shew them no favour." If another man will not clothe you when you are naked, and feed you when you are hungry, you would say he is unmerciful. And yet you will do a thousand times more against vourselves, even cast away both soul and body for ever, and never complain of your own unmercifulness: yea, and God that waited upon you all the while with his mercy, must be taken to be unmerciful, if he punish you after all this.

# EVENING.—APRIL 7.

JEHOVAH THE REFUGE OF THE HELPLESS.

Let God arise in all his might, And put the troops of hell to flight; As smoke that sought to cloud the skies, Before the rising tempest flies.

He rides and thunders through the sky; His name, Jehovah, sounds on high; Sing to his name, ye sons of Grace; Ye saints rejoice before his face. The widow, and the fatherless, Fly to his aid in sharp distress! In him the poor and helpless find A Judge that's just, a Father kind.

He breaks the captive's heavy chain, And pris ners see the light again; But rebels that dispute his will, Shall dwell in chains and darkness still.

Watts.

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND THE FULNESS THEREOF.

I. COR. CHAP. X.

- 21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.
- 22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?
- 23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.
  24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.
- 25 Whatsoever is sold in the shamble, that eat, asking no question for conscience' sake.
  - 26 For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.
- 27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake.
- 28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience's sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:
- 29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?
- 30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?
- 31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God.

# CHERISH THE FAITH AND LOVE WHICH ARE IN CHRIST.

"Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." This exhortation, addressed by one of the disciples of our Lord, to hearers, and in a former age, we may do well to take to ourselves. As we advance in life, we frequently find ourselves in danger of being carried away by the wicked spirit of the times, and tempted to conform to the follies of the world. Alas! how weak, how fleeting are our strongest resolves, and how soon does the evil spirit approach our hearts, and tempt us to copy the defects of others, and make their weaknesses and their vices our own!

In early life, when holy truths were first commended by pious friends, to our opening minds, how pure, how devout, how sincere were our aspirations! How sensible were we then, of the dignity and importance of the commandments of God, and with what sacred ardour did we glow in his temple! Not such have our feelings been at a subsequent date, when matured reason ought to have rendered them still more acceptable to our Eternal Father. The pure heart, once the source of happiness, ceased to be ours; the love which sought comfort in another's joy, the confidence which no distrust could shake, passed away; and the prayer, once unaffectedly fervent, has been formally, but coldly breathed; uttered by the lips, not dictated by the heart.

We might, with such faculties as were bestowed upon us, have acted a better part. Taught to reverence what was sacred, youthful levity ought not to have betrayed us into joining in the ungodly mirth of scorners, whatever their worldly honours might be. We should have fled from profaneness, and never for a moment attempted to treat religion with levity. Weak and abject is that man, who, by such means, seeks to gain a reputation for superior wit and intellect. The merest pretender to learning can thus degrade himself. It requires no extraordinary tact or talent, to speak of solemn themes with indecorous ridicule and affected disdain.

It was not required of us, that any severity of manners, any painfully formal assumption of gravity, should prove that our hearts were seriously disposed. We had but to "hold fast faithfully the form of sound words" which we had heard, and to exhibit that love which is found in Christ Jesus, to prove that we were devoted to him. Happy would it have been for us, had we uniformly done so. Neglecting this, we acted in opposition to our best interests here, as well as hereafter. Too pointedly that folly cannot be condemned, nor too sincerely lamented, which refused to listen to the apostle's exhortation, and devised idle excuses, and vain pretexts for persevering in such refusal.

We ought not ungratefully to forget that our thanks are due to the Supreme Being, for enlightening our minds, by giving us his holy and wise commandments, to be the rule of our lives. Ought we not then to be eager to walk in his road,—the road that leads to heaven. Yet to those commandments the foolish heart has refused dutiful submission, because they were opposed to the mean propensities and sensual cravings of the body. The dull votary of pleasure was but too well prepared to give up all beyond the grave, for the sinful gratification of an hour.

If such our nature—if such the weakness of our minds, what shall we do to escape the wrath, which, remaining in a state of sin, will eventually consume our last hope? We must resolve to hold fast the form of sound words, in faith and love of Christ. Then shall we have strength to resist temptation; be prepared, in every stage, to submit to the will of God, to keep to him, and with faithful obedience remember his commandments. His law written in our hearts, we shall not be prevailed upon to give our sanction to any thing in the shape of sin. Our duties will be punctually and cheerfully fulfilled, our virtue will be fortified against whatever may assail it, and we shall know how to "overcome evil with good." Trusting in God, true comfort will be ours, while looking through the vista of years which we may imagine we have to pass here, bright prospects of a better world will gladden our regenerated spirits as we advance; and our hearts, grateful to the Giver of all good, enjoy true repose.

#### GOD ONLY CAN PRESERVE HIS CREATURES.

Two of my friends have been cut off during my illness, in the midst of such a life as it is frightful to reflect upon, and here am I, in better health and spirits, than I ever can remember to have enjoyed, after having spent months in the apprehension of instant death. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! Why did I receive grace and mercy? Why was I preserved, afflicted for my good, received, as I trust, into favour, and blessed with the greatest happiness I can ever know, or hope for in this life, while these were overtaken by the great arrest, unawakened, unrepenting, and every way unprepared for it? His infinite wisdom, to whose infinite mercy I owe it all, can solve these questions, and none else. A freethinker, as many a man miscals himself, would, without doubt, say, "Sir, you were in great danger, and had, indeed, a most fortunate escape." How excessively foolish, as well as shocking, is such language! As if life depended upon luck, and all that we are, or can be, all that we have now, or can hope for hereafter, could possibly be referred to accident. To this freedom of thought it is owing, that he, who is thoroughly apprised of the death of the meanest of his creatures, is supposed to leave those whom he has made in his own image, to the mercy of chance; and to this it is likewise owing, that the correction which our Heavenly Father bestows upon us, that we may be fitted to receive his blessing, is so often disappointed of its benevolent intention. Fevers, and all diseases, are regarded as accidents; and long life, health, and recovery from sickness, as the gift of the physician. No man can be a greater friend to the use of means upon these occasions than myself; for it were a presumption and enthusiasm to neglect them. God has endued them with salutary properties on purpose that we might avail ourselves of them. But to impute our recovery to the medicine, and to carry our views no further, is to rob God of his honour. He that thinks thus, may as well fall upon his knees at once, and return thanks to the medicine that cured him, for it was certainly more immediately instrumental in his recovery than either the apothecary or the doctor.

Comper.

### MORNING.—APRIL 8.

#### DUTY TO GOD.

That God, who made the worlds on high, The air, and earth, and sea, Own as thy God; and to his name, In homage bow the knee.

Let not a shape, which hands have wrought Of wood, or clay, or stone, Be deem'd thy God; nor think him like Aught thou hast seen or known.

Take not in vain the name of God;

Nor must thou ever dare,

To make thy falsehoods pass for truth,

By his dread name to swear.

That day on which he bids thee rest
From toil, to pray and praise—
That day keep holy to the Lord,
And consecrate its rays.

O may that God, who gave these laws, Write them on every heart; That all may feel their living power, Nor from his paths depart!

Gibbons.

HAPPY ARE THEY WHO ARE AIDED BY GOD. PS. CXLVI.

3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that

very day his thoughts perish.

5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God:
6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that

therein is: which keepeth truth for ever.

7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed; which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners:
8 The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth

them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous:
9 The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the
fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth
upside down.

10 The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

## THE TRUE WORSHIPPER OF GOD SEEKS THE WEL-FARE OF HIS FELLOW-CREATURES.

If we aspire to heaven, it is most important that we should search our hearts, and ask if divine love is advancing in our souls? Do we, as we pass through life, feel sensible of the presence of a superintending Deity; and does that consciousness, in proportion as it is cultivated, become more and more delightful? When our natural spirits are weak, and the mind can make but eeble efforts at devotion, have we still a sense of

holy repose, from the conviction that whatever may threaten our immediate comfort, God is near, and knows that our trust is in him? While labouring up the steep ascent which leads to heaven, longing for bliss above the skies, are we content that he should know the secrets of our hearts? Can we say with David, "Thou Lord knowest thy servant,"—can we say this, and feel that, knowing us, we may hope for his continued protection and support? Do we feel ourselves grow in admiration of the sacred law of God? Do we reverently esteem his precepts—do we feel not only the necessity, but the reasonableness, the beauty, and the pleasure of obedience? This we ought to experience, and at the same time feel a growing scorn for every thing which might lead us from the path of innocence, and tempt us, for present comfort, or worldly renown, to hazard the loss of the favour of our great Creator. Do we feel an anxious desire to become holy in the sight of God, not merely because he is powerful, and can reward his faithful followers, but because his august nature commands our love and admiration? Do we feel ourselves ready, under all circumstances, to submit to his dispensations, content with whatever lot may be assigned to us? In the words of the apostle, can we in "patience possess our souls"? When severe visitations come upon us, can we meet them with patience and serenity, and, for the love of our Eternal Father, give up our present interests, and subdue our mortal passions and desires? It is only when we can do this, that our souls are in the way of grace.

While these thoughts are ours, it is fitting that we should also consider what are our sentiments towards mankind. Do we feel sincere, unrestrained benevolence? Are we more awake than formerly, to the endearing bonds that should unite all mankind, but more especially all Christians? Do we find the miserable passions which degrade humanity, are abated in us, while the social affections flourish in unwonted strength? Do we feel that we could renounce the selfishness formerly ours, content to regard ourselves but as parts of a whole, whose undivided interests we desire to promote.

Our benevolence ought to be extended not only to those who think as we do, but towards those whom an unsanctified heart might be ready to imagine it had some just excuse for excluding from the list of those it loves, and towards whom we are disposed to entertain a secret aversion,

or whom at least we would repel from communion with us. Severe self-examination is the duty of a true Christian. He should ascertain the state of his mind with regard to those who have nothing in common with him in religious sentiments. By this it is not meant, that Christian charity requires us to be the apologists for every error. It proves no want of love to a friend, in certain cases, to suspect that a disorder which gives him little apprehension, may prove fatal. But it is sinful for us to hate those we think mistaken in their course, and to pronounce that they, in differing from us, have fallen into damnable errors. We should love those who differ from us, even though we think they are misled, and honour that which is amiable, in persons who appear to us, in other respects, defective. As the disciples and servants of Christ, we should be prepared to pardon what is wrong, and to recal the wanderer to the right path; to pity, and not to condemn, should he still persist in error.

In our pilgrimage through life, it must be ours to remember the divine precept, "If ye love me, love one another." The celestial lustre of that injunction gives glory to the faith of the true believer. Grant, merciful Father! that we may never lose sight of it; but that, aspiring to the perfection of our Saviour, we may be especially anxious to make it manifest, in all our doings, that we are not unmindful of his solemn injunction to cultivate brotherly love; and may it eventually be his good pleasure, that the whole human family, laying aside their differences, shall unite with one accord, before the throne of the Eternal, their faith, their desires the same; their sole object, by kindness to each other, to render acceptable homage to the Creator of all.

#### THE REVELATION OF GOD'S LOVE.

Could there be any thing to be ashamed of in that revelation of God's love to a fallen world, which the Almighty first proclaimed with his own lips in Paradise, and which by himself or his messengers he continued to announce to the nations of the earth from age to age for four thousand years? Need St. Paul be ashamed to preach what the angelic host sung at the birth of Jesus, and what Jesus himself and his disciples preached while on earth, and which Peter and the other apostles preached upon and after the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven? Did not St. Paul himself call it the "glorious gospel of the blessed God, and speak with admiring gratitude of the divine condescension in permitting him, who was the least, in his own estimation, of all who were sent to preach what he called the "unsearchable riches of Christ?" Why then should he be ashamed of it? Speaking after the manner of men he had good reason to be so; for he had already found, as Christ and the apostles

had found before him, that excellent as the gospel was in itself, and truly deserving to be called "good tidings of great joy;" yet the preaching of it had exposed him to obloquy and contempt. For twenty years he had been travelling from country to country and from city to city, proclaiming this gospel to all-to the Jew and to the Greek, to the philosopher and the peasant, to the learned and the unlearned; and although he was not without some success in every place, yet everywhere he met with much opposition, and was exposed to scorn and ridicule. He told the Corinthians that they (the apostles) were accounted fools for Christ's sake. "They were despised," and "were made as the filth of the world and off-scouring of all things." This being the case, he could not but apprehend that it would be so at Rome likewise, for the gospel was the same, and the heart of man was the same everywhere. If therefore the doctrines of the gospel excited the enmity of the people in Asia, Macedonia, and Greece, it was to be expected that they would meet with a similar reception in Italy. If his preaching of Christ was foolishness at Corinth, it was not likely to be held in better repute at Rome; nor did he so expect; but he had counted the cost, and was prepared to meet the sacrifice cheerfully. He had a sacred duty to perform, and neither danger nor reproach nor obloquy could deter him from it. He said, "I am a debtor to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both the wise and the unwise. So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." Adding as a ground for this determination, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." The apostle here assigned two reasons for not being ashamed of the gospel,-one taken from the consideration of its nature, and the other of its effects; the latter resulting from the former. Why was he not ashamed of it? Because it was the power of God unto salvation,—an unanswerable reason truly, and one which might well avail to bear him above the opposition of the world. But why was it th "power of God unto salvation?"-because of something extraneous to it, or something intrinsic, inherent with its nature, or a composition of both? Manifestly the latter, for he adds "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Setting out from this the apostle proceeded to vindicate and elucidate the whole statement. The deliberate judgment of such a writer as St. Paul would of itself command our respect had he been merely a man like ourselves; how much more when it was called to mind that he wrote, as he preached, under the inspiration of heaven. These words, or the sentiments contained in them, were not his own, but those of the Holy Dr. Hudson of Stafford.

# EVENING .-- APRIL 8.

OUR THOUGHTS ARE KNOWN TO GOD.

Thou, Lord, by strictest search hast known My rising up and lying down;
My secret thoughts are known to thee,
Known long before conceiv'd by me.

Thine eye my bed and path surveys,
My public haunts and private ways:
Thou know'st what 'tis my lips would vent,
My yet unutter'd words' intent.

Surrounded by thy power I stand, On every side I find thy hand: O skill for human reach too high! Too dazzling bright for mortal eye!

O could I so perfidious be To think of once deserting thee? Where, Lord, could I thy influence shun, Or whither from thy presence run?

Drummond's Selection.

GOD WILL PRESERVE THOSE WHO CONFIDE IN HIM.

DANIEL VI.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver

him.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God, whom thou servest continually,

he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

18 ¶ Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought

before him: and his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and

went in haste unto the den of lions.

- 20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?
- 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.
  22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: for asmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O King, have I done no hurt.

O King, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

# MADNESS OF NEGLECTING THE INTERESTS OF THE SOUL.

"Go thy way for this time, and at a more convenient season, I will send for thee." This was the language of Felix, when the reasoning and expostulation of the apostle of Jesus, brought him justly to comprehend the perilous situation in which he stood. His mind was too feeble to take the course which reason and religion would have prompted, yet the evil one dared not to suggest that all thoughts of repentance should be aban-

doned; but only that under the then pressure of worldly affairs, he should defer the reform which he contemplated till a future day. This was the apology suggested to his mind; it succeeded with Felix, and he remained unrepentant.

Shall we act the same part? Shall we excuse ourselves from thought to-day, and brave all the dire consequences that may result from postponing amendments till to-morrow. Let us, more awake to the importance of immortal concerns, resolve to seize the passing moment, and satisfy ourselves, that to delay is to lose the golden opportunity, now ours, of securing eternal happiness.

Why, as rational beings, should we hesitate to secure to ourselves all the advantages which religion offers? What is there more noble and excellent-more worthy the dignity of rational man's contemplation, than the promises of God? Shall we weakly wish to prolong the period of abject darkness, instead of at once welcoming the light which burns for us? Do we feel that we have wandered (and who does not)? ought not an immediate return to God be our object? Why, for all that the world can offer, should we trifle with our salvation? Were life certain to continue for a long period, which we all know it is not, still it would be folly to increase the difficulty of returning to him whom we have offended, by continued neglect and senseless delay.

But what is our condition, that we should dare to calculate on future years, or future months to come? Is not human life but a mere vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth for ever? Then what warrant have we for presuming that it will continue to be ours even for a short period? We may, perhaps, feel that we are young, and in the vigour of life; that we see hundreds about us who have numbered more years, and who yet, by their conduct seem to think it too soon to attend to affairs of the soul. This we may for a moment imagine, while we look upon the living; but let us turn our eyes to the dead. Yet a little while, and these were seen gay and active, full of life, indulging in brilliant hopes, and forming gigantic schemes. Some of them would have thought an admonishing friend absurdly importunate, who would have interfered with their business and their pleasures, by speak-Yet these ing to them of death or eternity. were even then on the verge of the tomb. have since seen their lifeless remains in their coffins; we have attended their funerals, or worn for them the dress of mourning. Those

forms, once so full of vigour, and perhaps of beauty, now moulder in the dust, helpless and unconscious, as the meanest remains of the human frame, which had sunk a century before, beneath the weight of fourscore years, to the grave. Whether prepared for the awful change or not, these have now ceased to live, have stood before the bar of God, and must be at the present moment doomed to happiness or misery. May not their fate speedily be ours? The dread change which we have to undergo may come upon us in a moment; and awful indeed will it be, should it find us unprepared.

What if this night we find ourselves hurried into the presence of a long neglected Deity! Snatched in a moment from a world to which our hearts have been wedded, which has engrossed all our thoughts! Oh, how ought we to shudder if we duly reflect on the sad consequences which must follow! If we start at the uncertainty of life, how terrible must the certainty of death prove, if we have not studied and fitted ourselves to meet it! Why may not infinite wisdom at once cut us off, to teach by our fall other beings as thoughtless as we are, how dangerous is the course which they continue to pursue?

We must not hesitate to humble ourselves before our Almighty Father, and desire to receive righteousness, and with it eternal life, from his free grace in Christ. Let holy obedience be our object. The neglectful, the unbelieving, may yet be saved, if they will but become true Christians. We ought to lose no time in striving to make our peace with God, for it would be worse than weakness to expect that he will change his immutable decree.

His demands upon us will continue the same, however rashly we may squander away the time allotted to us. "If we run with the footmen fainting in the race, shall we be able to continue with the horseman?" Jer. xii. 5. This we cannot imagine. Should a fearful disease threaten life, would a wise man say, I will stay till I grow worse, and then seek a physician; disease shall be allowed to get a firmer hold of my vitals, and then I will seek a cure. Who would thus act by his mortal frame? It is only when the soul is concerned that men neglect their true interest. Let not the life and health of the soul be foolishly trifled away.

If ever we regain the ground we have lost, it must be by the operation of divine grace on the heart. That certainly is more powerful and more

wonderful, in proportion to our spiritual maladies. But if we rest supinely when we ought to exert ourselves, can we expect that the holy spirit will be more ready to assist us, because we have so shamefully disregarded its behests. If it now move in our hearts, if we regret the sinful past, this may prove that we are not utterly forsaken by God; but these may be the last warnings that he will permit a heart hardened against him to receive. If still negligent, may not God even this day swear in his wrath, that we shall not enter into his rest. Heb. iii. 18. We may immediately die, and what can be more terrible than death, for the unprepared sinner?

Bearing this in mind, in the name of our Saviour let us strive to guard against further delay, in seeking to make our peace with him who gave us being. We will not give sleep to our eyes in neglect of the important concerns of the soul; at once let us turn to the Lord, and prostrate before him, pray that our too late regret for errors past will not be in vain; that in his mercy, our souls, long wanderers from duty, will at length find rest, and be cheered by beatific visions of immortal glory.

BE HUMBLE TO GAIN THE FAVOUR OF THE ALMIGHTY.

The humble man hath these two opposite advantages. 1. He carries glory and honour to him, to whom it belongs, to its proper center and country; namely, to the ever-glorious God, and that ocean of goodness and perfection that resides in him: and this gives the man ease, and quietness, and composure of mind; for he doth not intercept the tribute that is due to his Maker, but pays it over to the right owner .. If he doth any good, noble, or becoming action, he checks the first motion of pride and ostentation in himself, and receives not the applause of others, but directs all the praise and glory of it to that God that hath done it by him, or in him, or for him: not unto us, but to thy name give the glory. And this gives him singular quietness, serenity, and evenness of mind, because he is not surcharged with that which belongs not to him, nor under those tortures and boilings of mind, which this tribute due to his Maker raiseth, when usurped by man to whom it belongs not. Again—2. By this humility and lowliness of mind the soul is empty, not of what it should have, but of what it should not have; and by that means becomes receptive and capable of blessing from the God of heaven, who filleth the hungry with good things, but sends the rich empty away. And this seems to hold congruity to the very nature of every intellectual agent, that acts with understanding and will. We find, even in the regulated motions of our own nature, a secret averseness to gratify a proud and haughty man; for he either scorns or rejects a kindness. as beneath him; or arrogates and owns it as his own due, and not a bounty; but a person truly humble, sensible of a benefit, thankful for it, gets within us, invites beneficence. And surely though the blessed God be not at all under the impotency of humane passions; yet he is a God of infinite wisdom, and placeth his best benefits, where they will be best Sir Matthew Hale. received and used.

### MORNING .- APRIL 9.

#### GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines Of never-failing skill, He treasures up his bright designs, And works his sov'reign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust him for his grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding every hour: The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Cowper.

# GOD TO BE CALLED UPON IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE. PSALM LXXXVI.

- 1 Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I am poor and needy.
- 2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee.
- 3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.
  4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord,
- do I lift up my soul.

  5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.
- 6 Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.
- 7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou
- wilt answer me.

  8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord;
  neither are there any works like unto thy works.
- 9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.
- 10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

# GOD CONSTANTLY WATCHES OVER HIS CHILDREN.

We are told by the Saviour of the world, that "the hairs of our head are all numbered." Let us winningly believe this, and rejoice in the announcement. Since it is so, we know that God

watches over, guides us on our way, and in all circumstances ordains what is to come to pass. From him, from his decrees, our joy and misery equally proceed. It is he who orders that the bright day and the day of gloom shall succeed each other, that mortals not being able to see what is next to come to pass, may learn to confide in the Lord, who provides for our welfare in his own way, and even by tribulation, works out our happiness and salvation.

Looking around us, at the magnitude and infinite variety of the works of God, when we contemplate the vast extent of the universe, we are bewildered, and disposed to say, "What is man, that God should regard him, and make him the object of his care?" Reflection, however, fails not to whisper, that his kind providence extends even to creatures not endued with reason; and we cannot but feel that we are more important in the scale of being, than they were designed to be, and are therefore capable of greater felicity. But in the same moment, the awful thought comes over us, that if we are distinguished from the beasts that perish, we have too often, in our progress through life, shewn, by our transgressions, that we are unworthy of the pre-eminence which was destined to be ours. The offences we commit, we may justly fear, are so serious as to render us too offensive in the sight of God, to remain longer the objects of his loving-kindness. Conscience reproachfully tells that he may justly punish us, by withdrawing the comforts we have heretofore known, and sending severe and lasting affliction.

Sinners as we know ourselves to be, how can we depend upon the providence of God? In vain we look around us; in vain we seek among men, for that which may soothe and console the agitated heart. The gospel alone can supply what is wanting. That brings real comfort, and for so inestimable a gift, we tender our heartfelt thanks to our gracious Redeemer, who has rendered the knowledge of our Creator, which, but for him would have distracted our bosoms with anxiety and fear, a source of purest joy. Thy passion, and thy death upon the cross, Oh Jesus! give us hope and confidence. Through the means of the gospel, these have led us to entertain a firm belief that our Lord knows our hearts and our necessities; that he "has numbered all the hairs of our head," and will still make us the objects of his bounty. His promises support our faith, and enable us to look serenely forward to brighter

days, by virtue of the sacrifice which he has made to atone for our misdeeds.

How greatly ought we to exult in this happy conviction, feeling that we owe to Christ the mighty boon that the Almighty, whose glory the heavens declare, and whose majesty all created beings serve but to proclaim, exalted as he is, deigns to notice us, encourages us to rely on his mercy, and authorises us to expect from it all that is good and glorious, in time and in eternity.

Possessed of this thought, all the dreariness of life vanishes, and the world appears beautiful to the mental eye. We can now serenely pursue our path, no longer borne down by the load of sin, of which we are conscious. New prospects are opened to us, and though humbled by a sense of our own demerits, we can still look forward to a happy futurity. If earth is filled with the sublime wonders of the great Creator's hand, how much more dazzling and superb must the heaven which he himself inhabits, be! It is there, where the benevolence of the Eternal will be fully experienced; there we shall more perfectly comprehend the power, the wisdom, and the bounty of the Lord. Great must be our transport, exquisite the enjoyment, when admitted to the divine presence, to behold him whose glory, distant as we are from his throne, is even here perceived to be so unspeakably magnificent. That which moves to adoration on earth, must give us extatic bliss in heaven. There, it will be ours to surround his throne, with hymns of undying gratitude. There, too, it will be for us to celebrate the sufferings of that Saviour to whom we owe our redemption. There, our thankfulness, like our felicity, will know no bounds. Acknowledging, with the liveliest emotions, the mercy by which we are so largely honoured, praise shall occupy us while ages roll away; when time shall have ceased, or resolved itself into eternity.

#### POWERFUL IMPRESSION MADE BY PASSAGES IN SCRIPTURE.

An incident occurs to my mind, which happened that evening, which, at least for the oddness of it, may deserve a place in these memoirs. I had then with me one Thomas Porter, a poor, but very honest and religious men, (now living at Hatfield Broadoak, in Essex.) who is quite unacquainted with letters, so as not to be able to distinguish one from another, yet is master of the Bible in so extraordinary a degree, that he has not only fixed an immense number of texts in his memory, but merely by hearing them quoted in sermons, has registered there the chapter and verse in which these passages are to be found: This is attended with a marvellous facility in directing those that can read to turn to them, and a most unaccountable talent of fixing on such as suit almost every imaginable variety of circumstances in

common life. There are two considerations in this case, which make it the more wonderful; the one, that he is a person of a very low genius, having besides a stammering which makes his speech almost unintelligible to strangers, so wild and awkward a manner of behaviour, that he is frequently taken for an idiot, and seems, in many things, to be indeed so; the other, that he grew up to manhood in a very licentious course of living, and an entire ignorance of divine things, so that all these exact impressions on his memory have been made in his riper years. I thought it would not be disagreeable to the colonel to introduce to him this odd phenomenon, which many hundreds of people have had a curiosity to examine; and, among all the strange things I have seen in him, I never remember any which equalled what passed on this occasion. On hearing the colonel's profession, and receiving some hints of his religious character, he ran through a vast variety of scriptures, beginning at the Pentateuch and going on to the Revelations, relating either to the dependance to be fixed on God for the success of military preparations, or to the instances and promises occurring there, of his care of good men in the most imminent dangers, or to the encouragement to despise perils and death, while engaged in a good cause, and supported by the views of a happy immortality. I believe he quoted more than twenty of these passages; and I must freely own, that I know not who could have chosen them with greater propriety. If my memory do not deceive me, the last of this catalogue was that from which I afterwards preached on the lamented occasion of this great man's fall: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'

Doddridge's Life of Col. Gardiner.

# EVENING.—APRIL 9.

### CHRIST WILL RECEIVE THE SINNER

Ye mourning sinners, here disclose Your deep complaints, your various woes: Approach; 'tis Jesus; he can heal The pains which mourning sinners feel.

To eyes, long clos'd in mental night, Strangers to all the joys of light, His word imparts a blissful ray; Sweet morning of a heavenly day!

Ye helpless, lame, lift up your eyes, The Lord, the Saviour, bids you rise; New life and strength his voice conveys, And plaintive groans are chang'd for praise.

Nor shall the leper hopeless lie, Beneath the great Physician's eye; Sin's deepest power his word controuls, That fatal leprosy of souls

That hand divine, which can assuage The burning fever's restless rage; That hand, omnipotent and kind, Can cool the fever of the mind.

Sterle.

ALL WILL NOT BE SAVED, WHO SEEM TO BE RIGHTEOUS: ALL WILL NOT BE LOST, WHO ARE KNOWN TO BE SINNERS. LUKE XIII.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 ¶ Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ve begin to say. We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye

are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. 29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west,

and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in

the kingdom of God.

30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

# THE CHRISTIAN MUST NOT BE TOO IMPATIENT OF THE DOINGS OF THE WICKED

"Let both grow together,—that is to say, the wheat and the tares, saith the Lord." These words may be regarded as imaging that which the Arbiter of all is pleased to permit to be constantly seen in the world, where the good and the wicked are found intermingled. Sometimes we are conscious of a wish rising in our bosoms that this were not so, when we dwell on the temptations, perils, and annovances which are thrown in our way, by many whom we are obliged to meet in the ordinary affairs of life. But are we right in cherishing such a thought? No; we should consider, that the whole of our life on earth is but a state of probation—a school in which we are to have those exercises which may fit our souls for eternity. We ought to feel this; and can we maintain, with reason, that our being in some degree connected with ungodly men, renders it impossible for us to remain faithful to virtuethat we cannot be conscientious, and must of necessity yield to temptation? We ought not to hold such language, to admit such an impression. Can we not even turn the evil to our advantage, by making it the means of strengthening pious resolves in our own bosoms? By looking on sin we may be cautioned as well as allured, deterred from doing evil, instead of being corrupted.

It is our own fault, if the evil which is done around us do not create in us a strong feeling that sin is at once a reproach and a curse, wherever it

may be found. If such a feeling is created by our beholding its workings, we must then understand why it is the will of the Eternal, that the wheat and the tares should grow together.

And can we with reason complain, that the wicked disturb our peace, and interfere with our comforts? We have but too much reason to fear that in this case the account stands pretty even. We render like for like; and if we are disturbed by them, they, in their turn, suffer from our errors. By our example or otherwise, we may lead them into evil. Withholding from them that indulgence which ought to be extended to such wanderers, we perhaps are the authors of much of the wrong which is worked by them.

But supposing this not to be the case, it should not be forgotten, that that virtue is most to be valued, which has been tried by adverse circumstances, and had to struggle with opposition; which has made sacrifices, and been subjected to varieties of suffering. That virtue alone is to be regarded as proved, which has encountered temptation, and conquered it.

By proving a living faith, by endeavouring to follow the example of virtue and humility, set by the great Author of our religion, we must seek heaven. It is not the mere observance of forms that will save a soul. Yet these, multitudes have regarded as all-sufficient. The enslaved mind has, in its weakness, sought to impose on the Most High, by pompous processions and laborious ceremonies, meant to be solemn, but essentially ridiculous. In the middle ages, the notion of the importance of an exact observance of forms, was carried so far, that it was esteemed, in the arts, heretical, to represent sacred subjects, in form or grouping, but after a peculiar model; yet the solemn professor of religion thought himself engaged in a holy exercise, while paying homage to a supposed image of the Virgin Mary, which presented to his eve the features of contemporary beauty.

Need we ask ourselves, why do we adore and reverence our Saviour,—why do we look up to him with awful veneration and glowing love? It is because we know, that in the midst of a warring world, he stedfastly bore witness to the truth. He yielded not to the foe, but unceasingly persevered in his onward course. Opposition could not wear him out, delusion could not prevail over him, and calumny could not subdue his courage. His glory was the more refulgent, from his coming in contest with the ungodly. "Let, then, the wheat and the tares grow together."

Yes, be it so, O Lord! if such thy good will and pleasure. We dare not remonstrate; we must not repine that this has been decreed. Of the arrangement we will endeavour to avail ourselves, so that it may tend to our eternal happiness. In all things devoutly submissive, we bow to thy immortal wisdom. We will endeavour to convert the wicked; we will be cautioned against sin by their fearful example, and trust that our own virtue will be proved more perfect and sincere, by striving against the allurements of vice. Adhering to this resolution, and steadily pursuing the course marked out for us to tread. with thy merciful aid, we shall pass to eternity with the same cheerful tranquillity with which, now, as the shades of night descend upon the world, we seek our ordinary repose, and look up to thee, with the earnest hope that thy gracious favour will bestow upon us, in a future state of being, everlasting happiness.

#### THE SEAL OF RELIGION.

The gospel of Christ is like a seal or signet, of such inimitaole and divine graving, that no created power can counterfeit it; and when the Spirit of God has stamped this gospel on the soul, there are so many holy and happy lines drawn or impressed thereby; so many sacred signatures and divine features stamped on the mind, that give certain evidence both

of a heavenly signet, and a heavenly operator.

A christian, who has well studied the doctrines and proofs of christianity, can give sufficient reasons for the truth of them, and for his believing them. He finds what is sufficiently satisfactory, to confirm his belief in the outward testimonies, in the miracles wrought in the world, and the prophecies fulfilled: "I have," says he, "in my understanding, many arguments and evidences of the truth of the gospel, and my reason is convinced that it is a divine religion. But there is a miracle wrought in my heart, that is of more efficacy than this, and is to me a more convincing proof of the gospel of Christ; eternal life is begun in me. I find my conscience, that was disturbed with the guilt of sin, established in peace, upon solid hopes of pardon. I have an interest in the love of God, and lively sensations of that love; I have a hatred of all sin, I live above the world, and have a holy contempt of the trifles, businesses, and cares of this life; I delight in the company of him that dwells in heaven; I find in my soul that I love him, and love those who are like him; I walk as seeing him, who is invisible; I have a zeal for his glory, and with active diligence I am employed for the honour of his name in the world. These things I find wrought in me by the gospel of Christ: the discoveries of the nature and works of God, by his gospel, have filled my soul with holy wonder, and bowed my spirit down to adore him. The revelations of his amazing condescension and love, have raised and fired my heart to love him; the examples of superlative piety I meet with in this gospel, have excited my holy imitation; and the motives proposed here, are so awful and so alluring, that all my powers of hope and fear are joined and engaged to constrain my obedience to the excellent and divine precepts of this religion. I feel that I am quite altered from what once I was, I am a new creature, and the change is divine and heavenly. There is something within me, that bears witness, that my religion is from God."

It is a witness that will, in some measure, appear in the life, wheresoever it is written in the heart: for eternal life is an active principle, it will be discovering and exercising itself. Is it possible, that a man should have the pardon of his sins, and sweet peace of conscience, a sense of the love of God who is an infinite good, a joyful satisfaction in his heavenly favour, and manifest nothing of this in his aspect and behaviour? That he should shew no serenity of countenance, no sweetness of temper, no inward joy? Is it possible that he should have an utter aversion to sin, a hatred of all iniquity in his heart, and not make it appear in his life? That he should maintain a holy contempt of this world, and scorn of it, in comparison of the future glories that his eye is fixed upon, so warm a zeal for God, and so hearty a love to men, and not manifest it to the world? Surely his life will be above, where his heart is; and his heart will be in heaven, where his treasures are. "Our conversation is in heaven," says the blessed Paul, under the influence of this religion and these hopes .- Watts.

# MORNING.—APRIL 10.

THE DECEITFUL SNARES OF SIN.

Sin has a thousand treach'rous arts To practise on the mind; With flatt'ring looks she tempts our hearts. But leaves a sting behind.

With names of virtue she deceives The aged and the young;
And while the heedless wretch believes, She makes his fetters strong.

She pleads for all the joys she brings, And gives a fair pretence; But cheats the soul of heav'nly things, And chains it down to sense.

So on a tree divinely fair Grew the forbidden food; Our mother took the poison there, And tainted all her blood.

Golden Treasury.

WHEN THE HEART NO LONGER CONDEMNS, WE CONFI-DENTLY LOOK FOR MERCY. 1 JOHN 111.

- 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
- 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.
- 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

- 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the
- 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.
- 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11 For this is the message that we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ve know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whose hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, now dwelleth the love of God in him

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not then have we confidence toward God.

THE THOUGHT OF DEATH SHOULD WORK AMENDMENT.

"Before my face the picture hangs, That daily should put me in mind, Of those cold names and bitter pangs That shortly I am like to find; But yet, alas! full little I Do think hereon, that I must die,

I often look upon a face Most ugly, grisly, bare, and thin; I often view the hollow place Where eyes and nose had sometimes been: I see the bones across that lie. Yet little think that I must die.

I read the label underneath. That telleth me whereto I must: I see the sentence too, that saith, 'Remember, man, thou art but dust.' But yet, alas! how seldom I Do think, indeed, that I must die!

Continually at my bed's head A hearse doth hang, which doth me tell That I ere morning may be dead, Though now I feel myself full well; But yet, alas! for all this, I Have little mind that I must die!

The gown which I am us'd to wear, The knife wherewith I cut my meat; And eke that old and ancient chair, Which is my only usual seat: All these do tell me I must die, And yet my life amend not I.

My ancestors are turn'd to clay. And many of my mates are gone : My youngers daily drop away, And can I think to scape alone? No. no: I know that I must die, And yet my life amend not I.

If none can 'scape Death's dreadful dart, If rich and poor his beck obey; If strong, if wise, if all do smart. Then I to 'scape shall have no way: Then grant me grace, O God! that I My life may mend, since I must die."

R. Southwell, 1592.

### CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN LEADS TO TRUE REPEN-TANCE

"Who can understand his errors." No morning dawns on any of us perhaps; no day closes in which we might not, with abundant reason. apply this passage of scripture to our own feelings, in which we ought not to recognise in ourselves sinners who have failed to keep the commandments of their gracious Lord, and who have daringly indulged in what he has prohibited. Be then the confession of our sins, our first exercise of the day, and let it spring sincerely from the heart.

It is happy for us that we feel deeply and pain fully the guilt which we have accumulated; happy for us that at least we do not try to hide it from ourselves, or to deny, to palliate, or to excuse it. We may smile, with a consciousness of repentance in our bosoms, and this godly sorrow which we feel, though painfully thrilling, has still in it something conciliatory; it is that which we would not shake off, as it promises to reconcile us to the Deity we have outraged. It indeed, may drive from us that joy which the world can offer, but it leads to that of which the world cannot deprive us; that peace of mind to which no other can

be compared.

Thanks to thee, "Our Father who art in heaven!" for having prepared for thy offending children such a road, by which they may return to comfort; for having permitted them to attempt regaining thy grace by repentance, and to be assured, that that proved to be sincere, they may feel certain of once more enjoying thy love and thy blessing. Accept then, O Lord, the pious and sincere vows of humble and contrite hearts, oppressed and crushed by a sense of their mis-We breathe them only before thy throne, and look for that aid which thou cans't bestow. Our supplications issue, thou knowest it, great searcher of hearts, from a spirit at length duly moved by thy merciful bounty, enlightened and sanctified by thy holy word, and saved, so we confidently trust, by thy only begotten son.

Mighty Creator, who governest the heart of

man, and to whom its most secret intentions are revealed, we beseech thee to awaken in us that lively zeal which ought to inhabit our bosoms; and grant that powerful assistance by which alone we can be able to resist all temptation, and aspiring to gain thy heaven, prove ourselves equal to any effort of self-denial, to any sacrifice in the cause of truth and holiness, which circumstances may require.

Save us, O Lord! from the misery of henceforth finding ourselves faithless to thee, and to our own promises, that we may again, at the close of day exclaim, as we have had reason to do on many preceding evenings-"This day also, we have broken the covenant," but grant us, on the contrary, the felicity of being able to say, with truth, not only on the evening of each passing day, but also in that solemn hour, when all sublunary objects must lose their value to our fading eyes, and while we feel that we have reached the threshold of another state of being, "We have kept faith, and our faith has exerted itself by true devotion to thee, O Lord—by self-improvement, and by acts of love to our fellow pilgrims on the road to eternity." Should this be our happiness; should our satisfied spirits feel enabled thus sincerely to exclaim, then may they unhesitatingly go further, and add with exulting confidence, "Henceforward is bestowed upon us the crown of righteousness."

## EVENING .-- APRIL 10.

THE QUICKENING SPIRIT INVOKED

Once more we come before our God, Once more his blessing ask; O may not duty seem a load, Nor worship prove a task!

Father, thy quick'ning Spirit send From heaven, in Jesu's name, To make our waiting minds attend, And put our souls in frame.

May we receive the word we hear, Each in an honest heart; Hoard up the precious treasure there, And never with it part.

To seek thee all our hearts dispose; To each thy blessing suit; And let the seed thy servant sows, Produce a plenteous fruit.

Bid the convincing North-wind wake; Say to the South-wind, blow; Bid every plant thy power partake, And all the garden grow.

Revive the parch'd, with heav'nly show'rs; The cold, with warmth divine: And as the benefit is ours, Be all the glory thine.

BEAR WITH OTHERS, LOOK TO YOURSELVES. GALATIANS VI.

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he

have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season

we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of

GRATITUDE FOR PROLONGED LIFE SHOULD RENDER US ACTIVE IN DOING GOOD.

"I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy," may be the exclamation of some, perhaps of all of us, from day to day. So long as this continues to be the case, we can but with pain and apprehension reflect that we grow older, and lament the precious time which we have lost, and which can return no more. We must mark with regret our decreasing strength, and other indications of decay. Such would not be the case, if our consciences bore witness for us that we had well employed the years which have fled; of having lived on earth as they ought to do whom the gospel has taught to look for a home in heaven. Do they whisper to us that we have laid up treasures, and gained wisdom in the course of our progress, and above all, a knowledge of the Most Holy. Such, unhappily, is not the case, or, at all events, we feel that we ought to have done much more than we have accomplished. This we deeply feel, in the hour of self-examination; we feel it, and therefore we sincerely acknowledge every new day granted to us, every prolongation of our earthly existence, as a new instance of the kindness of our gracious Parent, a blessing affording us opportunities for preparing for eternity. which demands the expression of our heartfelt gratitude. Through this boon we can still learn wisdom, endeavour to study the ways of God, and labour to bring our hearts to a sense of all his mercies, further improve our mental faculties, and rescue ourselves from the tribunals of sin and folly. We may also employ ourselves in charitable labours to a greater extent than heretofore, and increase the number of our good works, which, unhappily, at present, is infinitely too small.

Whether we have vet many days before us, in which we may hope it will be ours to gain wisdom, with knowledge of the Holy One, and to live according to such knowledge, is that of which we cannot be assured. It may not be his pleasure to concede to us such opportunities for retrieving the miscarriages of other days. Should mercy so far condescend, let us humble ourselves before the Giver of all good, and hasten to avail ourselves of the important boon. The Lord despises not the lowly, and humility bespeaks from him, grace, honour, and glory. No mansion the Holy Spirit loves better than the sinner's humble bosom. Humility can do much for offending mortals. It can teach us, like St. Paul, to be content in any station which may be assigned to us, and while the Christian feels all-dependent on God, he will little heed the enmity and scorn of a persecuting

But whatever the Author of our being may ordain, let us this evening resolve, without delay, to correct the errors of our past life, and endeavour to walk before God, and untiringly to employ ourselves in doing good, so long as he is pleased to afford us time for doing it. The consciousness of acting so that we may calculate on gaining the approving smile of our Maker, is most sweet;the joy of seeing, when we look back on the track in which we have moved, that a host of good works will follow us into the life of retribution, and bear witness for us at the throne of the Eternal Judge, is among the most exquisite sensations that can be known on this side of the grave. But not only here will they sustain; they will be our happiness elsewhere; and it is on them we shall have to draw for fresh themes of sacred exultation, after mercy has permitted us to enter the home of everlasting peace.

CAUTION TO BE USED IN DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

Joon Monday morn, as soon as the Cinque-Ports are open, I have a particular prayer of thanks, that I am reprieved to the beginning of that week; and every day following I knock

thrice at heaven's gate, in the morning, in the evening, and at night; besides prayers at meals and some other occasional ejaculations, as upon the putting on a clean shirt, washing my hands, and at lighting of candles; which, because they are sudden, I do in the third person. Tuesday morning I rise winter and summer as soon as I awake, and send up a more particular sacrifice for some reasons; and as I am disposed, or have business, I go to bed again. Upon Wednesday night I always fast, and perform also some extraordinary acts of devotion, as also upon Friday night; and Saturday morning, as soon as my senses are unlocked, I get up. And in the summer time, I am oftentimes abroad in some private field, to attend the sun-rising: and as I pray thrice every day, so I fast thrice every week; at least I eat but one meal upon Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, in regard I am jealous with myself to have more infirmities to answer for than others.

Before I go to bed, I make a scrutiny what peccant humors have reigned in me that day; and so I reconcile myself to my Creator, and strike a tally in the Exchequer of heaven for my quietus est, ere I close my eyes, and leave no burden upon my conscience. Before I presume to take the holy sacrament, I use some extraordinary acts of humiliation to prepare myself some days before, and by doing some deeds of charity; and commonly I compose some new prayers, and divers of them written in my own blood. I use not to rush rashly into prayer, without a trembling precedent meditation; and if any odd thoughts intervene and grow upon me, I check myself. and re-commence: and this is incident to long prayers, which are more subject to man's weakness and the devil's malice. I thank God I have this fruit of my foreign travels, that I can pray to him every day in the week in several languages, and upon Sunday in seven, which, in oraisons of my own, I punctually perform in my private post-meridian devotions.

### Et sic æternam contendo attingere vitam.

By these steps I strive to climb up to heaven, and my soul prompts me I shall go thither; for there is no object in the world delights me more than to cast up my eyes that way, especially in a star-light night; and if my mind be overcast with any odd clouds of melancholy, when I look up and behold that glorious fabric, which I hope shall be my country hereafter, there are new spirits begot in me presently, which make me scorn the world and the pleasures thereof, considering the vanity of the one and the inanity of the other.

Thus my soul still moves eastward, as all the heavenly bodies do; but I must tell you, as those bodies are over-mastered and snatched away to the west, raptu primi mobilis, by the general motion of the tenth sphere, so by those epidemical infirmities which are incident to man, I am often snatched away a clean contrary course, yet my soul persists still in her own proper motion. I am often at variance and angry with myself (nor do I hold this anger to be any breach of charity) when I consider, that whereas my Creator intended this body of mine, though a lump of clay, to be a temple of his Holy Spirit, my affections should turn it often to a brothelhouse, my passions to a bedlam, and my excesses to a hospital. Being of a lay profession, I humbly conform to the constitutions of the church and my spiritual superiors; and I hold this obedience to be an acceptable sacrifice to God.

Difference in opinion may work a disaffection in me, but not a detestation; I rather pity than hate a Turk and Infidel, for they are of the same metal and bear the same stamp as I do, though the inscriptions differ.

Howell's Familiar Letters. 1635.

## MORNING.—APRIL 11.

THE STUPENDOUS WORKS OF THE ALMIGHTY.

'Tis by thy strength the mountains stand, God of eternal pow'r; The sea grows calm at thy command, And tempests cease to roar.

Thy morning light, and evening shade, Successive comforts bring; Thy plenteous fruits make harvest glad, Thy flowers adorn the spring.

Seasons and times, and moons and hours, Heav'n, earth, and air are thine; When clouds distil in fruitful showers, The Author is divine.

Those wandering cisterns in the sky,
Borne by the winds around,
With watery treasures well supply
The furrows of the ground.

The thirsty ridges drink their fill,
And ranks of corn appear;
Thy ways abound with blessings still,
Thy goodness crowns the year.

Watts.

#### GOD'S VISIBLE GLORY. PSALM XCVII.

1 The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

3 A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

4 His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

# THE POWER AND WISDOM OF THE CREATOR SEEN IN MAN'S CONSTRUCTION.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." We cannot contemplate the formation of our bodies, without feeling, with the psalmist, that we are wonderfully made. God has been pleased to shew his knowledge and his power in their construction. Their vital power, their activity, their susceptibility of pain and comfort, we cannot survey, O mighty Creator! without admiring thy wisdom. Thy loving-kindness is not less conspicuously displayed than thy might; and thy awful attributes are as

clearly seen in the exquisite fashion of our mortal frames, as in that of those immense celestial bodies

"Which flame for ever, through the boundless sky."

Were there neither suns nor moons to image the glory of God, nor stars shining in heaven to indicate his unchangeable existence, the human form alone would suffice to attest his grandeur, and to proclaim his wisdom and his might.

Great and wonderful Deity! we feel that we ourselves are proofs of thy glory; but Oh! adorable Lord! we also feel that we, the marvellous works of thy hand, should be unworthy of that form which thou hast so admirably moulded, unworthy of possessing those exquisite perceptions which thou hast made ours, of these admirably contrived limbs, of the capacity we have of expressing our feelings, by look and gesture, and the mighty gift of speech, did we not constantly recal the goodness of the Author of our being, and desire, in all our doings, to glorify thy holy name.

For that thou hast granted to us so much, be pleased to accept our heartfelt thanks, O Lord! It is with this intent, that we survey ourselves again and again, and doing so, we contrive to find new themes for admiration of the Eternal mind of which we are the offspring. We find no limb superfluous, and each is so disposed, that it may best, most efficiently, and most promptly assist that body of which it is the ornament. With what superlative skill have the organs of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and feeling been made! How suitable to their several uses are they all how finely arranged—how ingeniously protected! How truly astonishing is the pliable conjunction of one limb with another-how surprising the texture of the nerves and the veins, and how firmly, yet how delicately are all these parts arranged and connected! With each other they are all bound up most artificially. Every limb, vessel, muscle, vein, nerve, and sinew, are disposed just where they ought to be found,-just where they can most promote the object for which they were originally designed.

Nor do the wonders comprehended in our persons end here; if we look at the system of nutrition, which has been contrived for incessantly renewing our strength, can we do other than marvel at the matchless plan we see in operation? Then let us reflect on the incomprehensible intelligence which devised the circulation of the blood, which commands it to stream from the heart,

through the veins, and subsequently return, without being impeded in its course;—further, if we contemplate the refreshment provided for the body, every moment, by the ceaseless contracting and expanding lungs introducing the air we breathe, we can only sufficiently worship, praise, and thank our God, when we penetrate the mysterious wisdom thus placed, by his works, before our eyes.

The scripture does well to name man's form the temple of God. Such it is, and great will be the offence which we shall commit, if we disgrace, by sinful conduct, that temple, so wonderfully constructed. This we will bear in mind; and so often as our attention rests on ourselves, on what thou hast made us, it shall be our delightful task, on each returning day, to sound thy praise. All our senses shall be employed in proclaiming thy

goodness, O God!

Such a course we purpose to pursue through the whole of our lives; and when, in the course of nature, we perceive that day to be at hand. which must cause this fair edifice to sink into the dust, we will still rejoice in the mercies of the Eternal, looking forward to that period, when by his will, our bodies will be assimilated to the glorified body of Jesus, and when to all other bounties, will be added the gift of immortal life. How the soul rejoices in the glad thought, that, dead to mortality, when this terrestrial form is seen no more, this corruptible will be permitted to put on incorruption. The bliss of that thought we owe to thee, Divine Saviour of the world! Enable us to be appropriately grateful with soul and body, and let thy Spirit, while we are here, strengthen our weakness, and save us from degrading the frame so exquisitely devised, which it is ours to wear, in our progress towards the land of immortal spirits.

GOD'S WONDER-WORKING POWER IN REGARD TO THE SOUL OF MAN.

You find in general, that the scripture presumes it, that there is a renovation, a casting away of the old coat, a youth and spring again in many men from the old age and weak bed-rid estate of nature. Now, that you may conceive wherein it consists, how this new man is brought forth in us, by whom it is conceived, and in what womb it is carried, I will require no more of you than to observe and understand, with me, what is meant by the ordinary phrase in our divines, a new principle, or inward principle of life; and that you shall do briefly thus. A man's body is naturally a sluggish, unactive, motionless, heavy thing, not able to stir or move the least animal motion, without a soul to enliven it; without that it is but a carcass, as you see at death; when the soul is apparated from it, it returns to be but a stock or lump of

flesh; the soul bestows all life and motion on it, and enables it to perform any work of nature. Again, the body and soul together, considered in relation to somewhat above their power and activity, are as impotent and motionless as the body without the soul. Set a man to remove a mountain, and he will heave, perhaps, to obey your command, but in event will do no more towards the displacing of it than a stone in the street could do; but, now let an omnipotent power be annexed to this man, let a supernatural spirit be joined to this soul, and then will it be able to overcome the proudest, stoutest diffi-culty in nature. You have heard, in the primitive church, of a grain of faith removing mountains; and, believe me, all miracles are not yet out-dated. The work of regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual life on one dead in trespasses and sins, the making of a carcass walk, the natural old man to spring again, and move spiritually, is as great a miracle as that. Now the soul, in that it produces life and motion, the exercise of life in the body, is called a principle, that is, a spring or fountain of life, because all comes from it; in like manner, that which moves this soul, and enables it to do that which naturally it could not; that which gives it a new life, which before it lived not, furnisheth it with spiritual powers to quell and subdue all carnal affections which were before too hard for it; this, I say, is called properly an inward principle; and an inward, because it is inwardly and secretly infused, doth not only outwardly assist us as an auxiliary at a dead lift, but is sown and planted in our hearts, as a soul to the soul, to elevate and enable it above itself, hath its seat and palace in the regenerate heart, and there exercises dominion, executes jndgment; and that commonly, either by prison or banishment-it either fetters or else expels all insolent rebellious lusts. Now, the new principle, by which not the man, but the new man, the Christian lives, is, in a word, the Spirit of God; which unites itself to the regenerate heart, so that now he is said to be a godly man, a spiritual man, from the God, from the Spirit; as before a living reasonable man, from the soul, from the reason that informed and ruled in him; which is noted by that distinction in Scripture betwixt the regenerate and unregenerate, expressed by a natural, or animal, and a spiritual man. Those creatures that have no soul in them are called naturals, having nothing but nature within to move them; others which have a soul, animals or living creatures, by both which the unregenerate is signified indifferently, because the soul which he hath stands him in little stead, his flesh rules all; and then he is also called a carnal man; for all his soul he is but a lump of flesh; and therefore, whether you say he hath a soul, and so call him an animal, or hath not a soul, and so call him a mere natural, there is no great difference in it.

Hammond.

## EVENING.—APRIL 11

COMFORT SOUGHT FROM ABOVE.

Lord, we come before thee now; At thy feet we humbly bow: O! do not our suit disdain; Shall we seek thee, Lord, in vain?

In thine own appointed way, Now we seek thee—here we stay; Lord, we know not how to ge, Till a blessing thou bestow. Send some message from thy word, That may joy and peace afford; Let thy Spirit now impart Full salvation to each heart.

Comfort those who weep and mourn; Let the time of joy return: Those who are cast down, lift up; Make them strong in faith and hope.

Grant that those who seek, may find Thee a gracious God, and kind; Heal the sick, the captives free, Let us all rejoice in thee.

Burder's Collection.

SUPPORT PROMISED FROM GOD. LUKE I.

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the

house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear. 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days

of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the

remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the

day spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

# CONFIDENCE IN THE ALMIGHTY WILL SUPPORT MAN IN HIS SEVEREST TRIALS.

"The Lord preserves the souls of his saints," we read in scripture, and we have reason to add that he also preserves the souls of those who cannot claim the glory of being among his saints. This, from day to night, and from night to day, our experience ceases not to tell. Wanting as we are in holiness, even in the progress of this day we have had gratifying experience of the goodness of God. Thou hast blest our labours, O Lord! and graciously taken ourselves, and those most dear to us, under thy gracious protection. Not knowing the invisible dangers which threatened our peace, perhaps our lives, we cannot be acquainted with the arrangements made by thy providence, for our comfort and preservation, but

we feel convinced that they are good and salutary, and that the seed which we have sown in hope, by thy grace and favour, will hereafter have fruition

in joy.

Little as our outward eyes can see; feeble as our understandings are, they teach us, with all humility, to offer our grateful adoration to thee, our bountiful Creator. Would that we could feel ourselves, in any degree, worthy of thy good providence! We cannot do this, but we humbly trust thy greatness will forgive our deficiencies. But for thy forbearance and merciful care, what at this day would have been the condition of our souls! To thee, we owe not only the needful comforts which have refreshed our mortal system, but the timely exhortations which have given us mental health, strengthened us to bear unrepiningly the burdens of life, and enabled us to repel the advances of despair. Since our courage has been supported by thy heart-cheering smile, we should ill deserve thy continued support, did we allow the last moments of the parting day to pursue their course to eternity, without raising our heart in thankfulness to thee, the Lord of all, the giver of all Good!

Grateful to us is the performance of this duty, while we contemplate the various benefits which thou hast permitted us to enjoy. The exercise itself is an advantage; it gives our souls increased confidence; we feel that we are immediately under thy protection—that our fate is in thy hands; and consequently, the burthens of life are borne with greater ease, and the tasks assigned to us are more ably, more vigorously performed; while, from the same cause, our pains are relieved, and our

sufferings are remembered no more.

Thy humble worshippers, devoutly fixing all their hopes on thee, feel that only those troubles which it is thy good will they shall know, can fall upon them; and also feel that, by thy wisdom, all will, eventually, be ordered for the best. By thee, our tears are numbered; thou hearest our sighs; thou seest the designs which wickedness may have formed against us, and thou wilt not permit thy children to be too sorely oppressed; thou wilt not suffer them to fall into a fatal snare, but thou wilt preserve their souls.

With this consoling thought, we may dismiss earthly cares. For the past, we need not lament, and the future we have no just cause to dread. We will not murmur under the burthens imposed by the present moment; but our hearts, with grateful resignation, desire to be all submission to

thy will. Mysterious and inexplicable as are thy decrees, prompted by infinite goodness, they must be wise and kind. Our spirits, soothed by this happy persuasion, while cheerful at ordinary seasons, are patient under tribulation, and still retain their confidence in thee. However dark and appalling the prospect before them, their faith and love shall not fail. Joyful and courageous, trusting to thy promises, we shrink from no fiery trial by which it may be the pleasure of our Father, and our God, to try the constancy of his children; and in the hour of suffering, claiming aid from above, we trust we shall not be found wanting.

THE BELIEVER IS BOUND TO GLORY IN THE GOODNESS OF GOD, AND IN THE COMING TRIUMPH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

To glory is the believer's bounden duty. He is called to it, as his gospel-privilege; and according to his faith he does triumph in it as his present happiness, and as a good ground for his hope of eternal joy. Wonderful blessings are pro-mised to this faith and hope; and they are truly experienced at this day. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his providing such a garment for glory and beauty. He has warranted thee to put it on; and having, through it, free access into his presence, he has commanded thee to join that great multitude, whom no one can number, who are standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and who cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever." Their robes are as white as the light, being washed clean in the blood of the Lamb; and through him they have conquered, as the palms in their hands denote; yea, are more than conquerors, having crowns of righteousness upon their heads, which can never fade away. For grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh, what matter of triumph is here! A righteousness absolutely perfect and everlasting! This greatly enhances all our high joys in Christ, that there is full security for their continuance. It depends on the faithfulness of God to his word and promise, fixed in his eternal counsels, and established upon immutable things. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord, and mine is everlasting righteousness. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." The state of a believer is always one and the same on God's part. He may vary in his apprehensions of his state; but with God there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. He may be a believer walking in darkness-tempted to doubt, he may pay too much attention to sense and feeling-may get into a legal spirit-his evidences may be clouded-when outward things and providences seem to make against him, his faith may be sore tried, and he may stagger at the promises of God through some fit of unbelief :- the man changeth, but God changeth not :- his mercies are ever-sure mercies; they cannot fail; for they spring from the ocean of grace, and are streams which no created power can cut off: but they shall infallibly return to it again, and shall bring with them all the happy objects of his love.

Romaine.

## MORNING.—APRIL 12.

RELIEF FOR THE SUFFERERS WHO SEEK THE LORD.

They that mourn in dungeon-gloom, Bound in iron and despair, Sentenced to a heavier doom Than the pangs they suffer there ;-

Foes and rebels once to God, They disdain'd his high controul; Now they feel his fiery rod Striking terrors through their soul.

Wrung with agony they fall To the dust; and, gazing round, Call for help-in vain they call, Help, nor hope, nor friend are found.

Then unto the Lord they cry: He inclines a gracious ear, Sends deliverance from on high, Rescues them from all their fear.

He restores their forfeit-breath, Breaks in twain the gates of brass; From the bands and grasp of death, Forth to liberty they pass.

Montgomery.

FORGIVENESS TO THE PENITENT-DESTROYING VENGEANCE WILL FALL ON THE STUBBORN SINNER. ISAIAH I.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat of the good of the land;

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

21 ¶ How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

22 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with

23 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty one of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

26 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called. The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

28 ¶ And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.

TURN TO JESUS FOR PEACE OF MIND.

"My peace I give unto you, says the Redeemer." Oh, that it may be ours to receive this peace at his hands. That gained, we need wish for nothing else in this world, for nothing of its goods and honours can compare with the value of this important boon. Why are we not in the present enjoyment of this blessed peace, even now. It is, perhaps, because we required too much. We have reason to believe that it was never intended by the great Architect of the universe, that perfect enjoyment, and uninterrupted repose, should be found in our world. This is the view we ought to take of human life, if we wish to be reconciled to it, such as we find it. With the crime which is raging in the world, the enticements of the senses, and the cruelty of men, under the reign of sin and death, it is hardly to be expected that a longing for perfect peace will soon be gratified. All the time and trouble we spend in seeking, is lost from our looking for it where it is not, and only serves to prove that we covet that which it is impossible here to secure.

How do we seek peace? Sometimes it is by giving ourselves up to the pleasures of the senses, which can afford no joy beyond the moment in which they are gained; at others, we fly to friends, and hope, from social intercourse, and their consoling words, to find relief from every care; but all too soon we discover that they want precisely the aid from us, which we desire to gain from

them.

And thus do we proceed, and learn, from day to day, by sad experience, that in the ordinary gratifications of life, we seek for peace in vain.

Such has hitherto been the case; so that each of us may say-"Oh, my soul, thou art frequently sighing, on discovering this to be true, but be contented, and moderate thy grief. According to the wise arrangements of God, this world has not been designed to yield everlasting peace to its inhabitants. Even the Saviour when on earth, with all his innocence and sanctity, was fated to experience great anxiety and anguish of heart. The misery which he beheld here, frequently brought tears from his eyes, and the sinfulness of men drew heavy sighs from his bosom. Little did he possess of those goods and comforts of life, which satisfy the very soul, for hours, days, and even weeks. His melancholy days were passed in ceaseless trouble and affliction; and he might indeed say, there is no peace in my bones. Look at him, Oh my soul! to gain conviction that perfect peace is not of earth; but at the same time, do so, in order to secure so much of peace, as man may be permitted here to know!" By imitating his godliness, and benevolence, we shall attain as great an extent of peace, as can be enjoyed below. What the world cannot give, we may find in Jesus. His doctrine, his passion, his death, and even the yoke which he imposes on his followers, furnish the only lasting means which exist for obtaining rest in this world.

Oh, then! let the weary pilgrim turn to him and find comfort. He will refresh our fainting spirits, and cheer our hearts with vivifying hope. Submit but to him, and the burthen will be found light. Of him, learn meekness and humility, and growing upon that, we shall taste of peace which is not of this world, and which the world will not

be able to take away.

But still, let us remember that we are living in a state of trial, for the improvement of our souls: and let us also be careful not to forget, that death. which has called away so many millions, must at length come to us. We must know, that that solemn, that painful hour, which precedes the entrance of the disembodied soul, into the world of spirits, is appointed to all that live. For us a last hour must one day be sounded; and while we contemplate it by anticipation, let us seriously ask ourselves, if ever in the countless multitude who have preceded us, one existed, who in such circumstances could find cause for rejoicing that he had neglected religion, or any one among the most distinguished and exemplary followers of Jesus, who lamented that too much of his life had been devoted to God? How many on the contrary have wished that their time could come over again, in order that they might devote to holy cares, what had been lightly given to worldly pleasure. While yet in the world where affliction and fear, and sin prevail, remember the sorrows we may know have for their object to prove and purify us; and to wake in our hearts a lively desire for things above. With a steady and cheerful eve, look to that hope which offers immortal life. and that will guide us to eternal peace. It will comfort us, when here we seek for it in vain. Yes, the pious Christian will find rest in the Lord. Let us place our faith, our confidence, in him, and banish weak despondency. Here we must expect annoyance; even in the passing day we cannot be screened from trouble. But be strong in the Lord-in the consolations of our faith-in the

certainty of our hopes. We must be wise in time, and not increase our sorrows by doubt and infidelity, by folly and sin. With thoughts fixed on heaven, let us throw all our burthens on the Lord, follow in the Saviour's track, trust in his word, and he will give the Christian blessed re-

### SFLF-DENIAL A BLESSING AS WELL AS A VIRTUE.

Unto the wiser Gods the care permit, Of what's for us and our affairs most fit. They will for pleasant things the best confer; To whom man is, than to himself, more dear. We by our blinder passions led astray, Do for a Wife perhaps or Children pray : Which they may chance refuse us out of love, Knowing what both the Wife and Boys would prove.

The consideration of which made a heathen philosopher say, That he was wont only in general terms to beg good things of the Gods, leaving it to them to determine what things were good for him. And indeed, our own wishes are but too commonly as blind as Rachel's who having so eagerly longed for children, that she impatiently cries, give me children, or else I die, died in child-bearing: and as destructive to the wishers, as their longing proved to the murmuring Israelites, who loathing the wholesome manna (that bread of angels) God had provided for them, ate their own bane in the flesh they had so greedily lusted for. Thus Lindamor, that so-affrighting virtue of self-denial proves to be little more than a son's letter of attorney to his father, of whose paternal kindness and consummate abilities in the management of affairs, his confidence amounts unto certainty. Nay, till my second thoughts checked the over-forward impetuosity of my first, I was about to add: since God resents an infinite satisfaction in the accomplishment of his own will, your making over your whole will to God, will impart to you that felicity, proportioned to the degree of the resignment. And, as the eye, whilst by the optic nerve tied unto the head, so chained, can taste delights, which it is dead to, being once severed from it, though (otherwise) it enjoy the best condition of which its inanimate nature can be supposed to be capable: so may your will by an identity or sameness (in tendency, though not in nature) with your Maker's, as 'twere engrafted into God's, receive a new and enlarged capacity, which will enable you to contain, and relish joys, highly transcending those, which the fullest fruition of your private wishes were able to create. Thus self-denial is a kind of holy association with God, and (by making you his partner) interests you in all his happiness, and acquisitions. Boyle.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 12.

SUFFERING PROMPTS PRAYER, AND PRAYER BRINGS RESTORATION TO PEACE.

> Fools, for their transgression, see Sharp disease their youth consume, And their beauty, like a tree, Withering o'er an early tomb.

Food is loathsome to their taste, And the eye revolts from light; All their joys to ruin haste, As the sunset into night.

Then unto the Lord they cry: He inclines a gracious ear, Sends deliverance from on high. Rescues them from all their fear.

He with health renews their frame, Lengthens out their number'd days: Let them glorify his name With the sacrifice of praise.

Montgomery.

#### CHASTENING TO BE DESIRED. PROVERBS III.

11 My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction :

12 For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

13 ¶ Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man

that getteth understanding. 14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise

of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. 15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things

thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. 16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left

hand riches and honour. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths

18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her:

and happy is every one that retaineth her. 19 The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the

clouds drop down the dew.
21 ¶ My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy 23 Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot

shall not stumble.

24 When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

## THE CHASTENING TO WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE SUBJECTED, LEADS TO EAPPINESS.

"Now no chastening, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them which are exercised thereby." It is joy, it is happiness for us to have the comfort conveyed by the assurance embodied in this precious word. We no longer accuse Providence when it sends a dark and dismal night, or severe seasons of calamity, to families or nations; but on the contrary we are prepared with humble acquiescence to adore that inscrutable Being, which out of such means can produce good. We are enabled with proper resignation to submit to the decrees of the Omnipotent, and though severe the pain, desire to make the sacrifice required

without a murmur. We do not now conclude that we are neglected, or forgotten, or pursued with unmerited severity; if our burthens are not lightened, or our sorrows alleviated at the moment when we crave such aid from the Governor of the universe. Who are we that we should take upon ourselves to criticise his decisions, and to sit in judgment on his plans? Who are we that we should claim to be more favoured than others?-and to expect to escape that misery which falls on so many of our brethren, whose demerits are not greater than we feel ours to be? We cannot claim to be exempted from sorrow, and we have the consolation of knowing, that it is a seed, which in due season, yields peaceable fruit, though we may not be able to see when this fruit shall be ours, or precisely what shape it will take.

Though such our condition, we will cheerfully submit to that fate which the Lord may appoint. To his care we commit all our affairs, and in the saddest as well as in the most joyous hours of our lives, our confidence in God shall continue unshaken, and our hearts be found true to duty. In this course, in this persuasion, it shall be our care to persevere cheerfully, and to the end.

When that end may come we know not, but by a pure life, by a contented frame of mind, and willing submission to our Almighty Father's pleasure, we may abate the sense of calamity, when the visitations we have to deplore are most severe. It is by such means only that under affliction we can hope to assuage our grief.

In the hour of sorrow, when our lot to us appears most hard, we must rest satisfied that it will eventually produce "peaceable fruit." Jesus, our high priest, was in all points tempted as we are. Are we tried with poverty? Do we want the necessaries of life? We cannot be poorer than Jesus was. Though he is now on a throne of glory, the time was, when he had not where to lay his head. He suffered shame, hatred, and reproach; he was despised of men—stricken, wounded, and bruised. Are we friendless in the world? So was Christ.

Is it not consoling to know this, and to feel that in all our troubles, a Saviour sees them, knows from experience what they are, and looks down with compassion on the sufferer?

Never let us forget when the chastening hand falls on us, it will eventually cheer us with the "peaceable fruits of righteousness." But to merit this, we must not attempt timidly to fly from it; we must meet it with devoted resigna-

tion, that our spirits may be duly exercised. The smaller the portion of happiness alloted to us in this world, the more ought our minds to be occupied with thoughts of the "peaceable fruits of righteousness" reserved for us in heaven. That we may gather that fruit there, and even taste of it while here, we are content to be tried in whatever way our Parent may deem fitting, whether by sharp contests, by evil rumours, or severe losses; by the cruelty of men, or by the warring of the elements; in any or in all of these, though mocked as our Redeemer was by the Pharisees, we trust, like him, to remain unsubdued, and claim thy assistance, O Lord! that we may neither weakly faint nor meanly succumb.

THOUGH DELAYED FOR A TIME, COMFORT WILL COME.

My friend, Mr. Thomas Walsh, who died in the year 1759, had been, during his health, a great asserter of free-will and perfection. In his last illness (which was a very long one), I saw him frequently. It was hardly possible for any created being to suffer, on this side eternity, more pain of body, or more dreadful darkness and distress of soul. His bowels literally came away from him, by peace-meal. And the Lord did not give him so much as one ray of spiritual comfort, for eight or nine months. He was indeed, led through a most tremendous wilderness of horrors. In this awful and disconsolate state (though he had, for many years before, been favoured with assurance of interest in Christ) he continued, until about half a minute before his death. All was darkness, even darkness that might be felt. "I now feel," said he, "the truth of our Lord's words, Without me ye can do nothing." But, just before he expired, the Holy Ghost shined in upon his soul. His last words were, "He is come, he is come, he is come! My beloved is mine, and I am his.

Mr. Chastanier was, some years ago, in great temporal difficulties and distresses. One night, falling asleep with an heavy heart, he dreamt that he was walking over a very rough country, exceedingly fatigued. At last, his progress was stopped by a wide river, whose waves were agitated by a violent storm. Pass over it, he must; but how, he knew not. After walking up and down the side of the boisterous stream, in hope of being able to find a fordable place, he at last discovered a very old and battered boat, with a grave man sitting in it; who said to him, "Young man, you are in great distress about passing this river: step into this boat, and I will engage to convey you safely over." In he, accordingly, went. The stream immediately grew smooth and placid, and they got soon and safe to the side. On quitting the boat, he thought he turned and looked very earnestly on the person that had done him this kindness; and it struck him, that it must be Christ. "Lord," said he, "is it thou?-"Yes," answered his friend, "it is I: and be of good cheer, for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."—On waking, it was so impressed upon his mind, that the boat was emblematic of his faith; which, for a considerable time before, had been very weak and battered indeed .- Soon after, Divine Providence gave a prosperous turn to his affairs.

Told me, by Mr. Chastanier himself, at London, this day, May 11, 1776.

Toplady.

## MORNING.-APRIL

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

Vital spark of heav'nly flame, Quit, Oh quit this mortal frame ! Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying: O the pain, the bliss, of dying ! Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife; And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper. Angels say, Sister spirit, come away. What is this absorbs me quite, Steals my senses, shuts my sight, Drowns my spirit, draws my breath? Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

> The world recedes: it disappears. Heaven opens on my eyes: my ears With sounds seraphic ring. Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly! O Grave, where is thy victory O Death where is thy sting?

> > Pape.

GOD'S CHILDREN HAVE A SURE DEFENCE. PSALM XCI.

- 1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
- 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
- 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
- 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day.

DEATH, THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, NO LONGER TO BE DREADED.

"He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." What a powerful exhortation to us does the sacrifice of the Redeemer convey. Do we remember with lively feelings of admiration, the heroes, who in the ranks of war, have braved all sorts of danger, pain, privation, and death, in the service of their country, as furnishing noble models of high minded love, glorious devotion, and extraordinary fortitude? What are these to the claims put forth by our gracious Lord, to our admiring gratitude? The warriors of whom we have spoken, sought to improve their condition, and looked to be rewarded by wealth and fame. Not such the case of our

Saviour. Joy, sublime, and eternal, was securely his, and assuming the great task which he undertook, for himself he had nothing to gain. He sought for no reward, but to bring a blessing on this sinful world. Where then can we find such an example of heroism, philanthropy, and selfdenial, as was offered by him? If this is not to be questioned, what duty can be more sacred, than to remember his love and faithfulness, and devote to him our thoughts, our hearts, and our lives?

To guard ourselves against neglecting a duty so important, nothing more can be necessary, than to contemplate the real merits of Jesus. Let us remember his passion, and his death; the contumely and wanton cruelty of which he was the object—and the dignity and benevolence which marked his earthly career, under bitter and protracted sufferings, and our bosoms cannot but be filled with veneration and love.

But happily we know, though our Lord endured so much, and even laid down his life for us, he did not remain in death. Christ did not continue to occupy the grave in which he had been deposited in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. We read that on the third day, he rose again. Most important is this fact for the contemplation of the redeemed. In the resurrection of Jesus, we see the strongest proof of that which constitutes our faith and our hope—the highest, best assurance, that we may look for everlasting happiness. Great consolation is bound up with this glorious denouement. Knowing the fate of our leader-knowing that he could not be held by the bonds of death—that he who was crucified is risen from the dead, what is there to cause perplexity, or to shake the faith that is in us? It proves to us, that the proud of to-day are not to be envied, nor the lowly despised; since, in the case of Jesus, we see that he who was trampled upon, is glorified; he who was humbled, is now exalted.

Since Christ has risen, may we not hope, that, mean as we are, whatever we experience here below, our Creator will ultimately confer upon us the boon of eternal life. Oh, yes! It is his gracious will that the sons of death shall hereafter enter into the ranks of angels, and be blessed with them in the presence of the Lord

Such being our destiny, it would be weakness in us to fear the hour of dissolution and corruption, or to weep in wild despair, at the tomb of those who were dear to us, but who have been

called away. It is not for us to seek the living among the dead. Not in that way can our troubled souls find relief—such unchristian-like sorrow is, in some measure, like denying our faith. Let us only remember death, to strengthen in our minds a determination to amend our lives.

"I live, and you also shall live," is the consoling promise of our Saviour. Be this deeply engraved on every memory. Dark as our terestrial prospects may be, let us stand firm in the faith, and the gloomy valley of the shadow of death

shall not make us tremble.

All bountiful Lord, in thy abounding goodness, deign to animate, strengthen, and sustain this faith in our souls. Let thy humility, while on earth, and thy present glory, be constantly before our eyes, that we, desiring to imitate the former, may hope, after death, to share the latter. From these images, by the powerful action of thy holy spirit, may our minds never wander. When the extent of our transgressions presses heavily on our minds. we will remember thy sufferings, call upon thy name, and feel relieved. Doubts shall vanish while we contemplate the work of thy redemption. Thou, Oh, merciful Redeemer! hast entered into thy glory, and we prepare to follow thee. Blisful hope is in the thought of the mighty work contemplated by thy love, to save poor sinners from the consequences of their wickedness. That thou hast fought the good fight for us, that thou hast conquered death, and opened for repentant mortals the gates of heaven, shall cheer us in all the dreary paths of life which we may have to explore. The consoling thought shall give us courage in adversity, but save us from too largely exulting in prosperity, and we shall serenely advance to the consummation of our destiny; happy in the knowledge that thou lovest, and that through thy goodness, it will be ours again to live.

#### CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH OVER THE FEARS OF DEATH.

On the near approach of death, she did not find herself so serene as she could wish. Her doubts and fears, though sharp, were short. The holy spirit, after a little season, filled her with gladness unspeakable, by witnessing, to her soul, the interest which God's free grace had given her in the atonement and mediation of him who died for sinners. Under these assurances, she experienced such repose and triumph, that she acknowledged, with tears of joy, that she had never felt any consolations equal to these. She repeated, on this happy occasion, Mr. Pope's verses, entitled, "The dying Christian to his soul," with such exalted transport, as evidenced, that she really felt all the holy ecstasies, which breathe in that exquisite piece of sacred poetry.

After this threatening illness, Mrs. Rowe recovered her usual good state of health; to which, it is extremely probable, the happy state of her soul, and her blessed foretastes of eternal life, might chiefly contribute. Communion with God, and the assurance of his favour, are frequently known to promote health of body, no less than of mind. The fellowship of the Holy Ghost is the grand cordial, of human life; and sometimes operates as a sovereign restorative, even to the mortal house of clay.

On the day, in which Mrs. Rowe was seized with that distemper, which, in a few hours, carried her off, she seemed, to those about her, to be in perfect vigour. About eight in the evening, she conversed with her usual sprightliness; and not without laughter. Afterwards, she retired to her chamber. About ten, her maid-servant, hearing some noise in her mistres's apartment, ran immediately in, and found her fallen or the floor, speechless, and in the convulsions of death. A physician and a surgeon were instantly sent for; but all applications proved fruitless. She expired, a few minutes before two o'clock, on Sunday morning, February 20, 1736-7. Her disease was judged to be an apoplexy. A devout book was found, lying open, just by her: it contained some meditations on spiritual subjects, but was afterwards lost; nor could the title be exactly remembered, by those who were with her at the time of her death. She often wished, and prayed, for a sudden dissolution: and God was pleased to grant her the request of her heart. Mr. Grove (who, by his mother's side, was related to Mrs. Rowe) expressed himself thus, in a letter to a friend, occasioned by the decease of this extraordinary lady: "Though her death," says he, "be universally lamented, yet the manner of it is rather to be esteemed a part of her happiness. One moment, to enjoy this life; -the next, or after a pause we are not sensible of, to find ourselves got beyond, not only the fears of death, but death itself; and in possession of everlasting life, and health, and pleasure -this moment, to be devoutly addressing ourselves to God, or employed in delightful meditations on his perfections; the next, in his presence, and surrounded with scenes of bliss, perfectly new, and unspeakably joyous: -is a way, of departing out of life, to be desired, not dreaded, by ourselves; and felicitated, not condoled, by our surviving friends. When all things are in a readiness for our removal out of the world, it is a privilege, to be spared the sad ceremony of parting, and all the pains and struggles of feeble nature." Dost thou ask, O converted reader, Which is best? To be snatched to heaven, in a moment or two; or to be thrown on a lingering bed, and so (if the Lord please) be able to bear some testimony to his love, power, and faithfulness? I answer: Leave the whole matter to him. If possible, do not entertain a wish, either one way, or the other. Be this your petition :

"Only receive my soul to thee:
The manner, and the time, be thine!"

Toplady's death of Mrs. Rowe.

## EVENING.—APRIL 13.

AWAKE US TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Thou God of glorious Majesty!
To thee, against myself, to thee,
A worm of earth, I cry;
An half-awaken'd child of man,
An heir of endless bliss or pain,
A sinner born to die.

Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand
Secure—insensible:
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heav'nly place,
Or shuts me up in hell!

O God, mine inmost soul convert,
And deeply, on my thoughtful heart,
Eternal things impress!
Give me to feel their solemn weight,
And tremble on the brink of fate,
And 'wake to righteousness.

Burder's Collection.

GOOD MEN WILL FEAR THE LORD, BUT ACT COURAGE-OUSLY. II CHRONICLES, XIX.

5 ¶ And he set judges in the land throughout all the cities of Judah, city by city,

6 And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment.

judgment.
7 Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

8 ¶ Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the Lord, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And, behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord: and Zebediah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites shall be officers before you. Deal courage-

ously, and the Lord shall be with the good.

# OUR WEAKNESS AND IRRESOLUTION THE SOURCES OF OUR PAIN.

'To-day he gives, and to-morrow he wishes to have it back," was the remark of Sirach; and may not we, in what concerns our intercourse with the Deity, be ranked among the unstable and deceiful people, who act the inconsistent part he describes? More rapidly than the clouds of spring are hurrying on, more frequently than the showers of snow, hail, and rain, descend, and are succeeded by the bright rays of the sun, do the thoughts, dispositions, and purposes of our hearts vary. Now, we address ourselves to heaven, and resolve, with all sincerity, to devote ourselves to virtue and religion; and in the next hour, we

worship the earth, and its goods, and think no more of him who created them and us.

Yes, there have been times when we lived in the full confidence, that death would unite us to the host of blessed saints above, and there have succeeded to them days in which we wished to hide from ourselves, and from thee, Oh Lord, our righteous judge; days in which we have heard thy voice in our consciences, only as from a great distance. We have frequently resolved to check this or that vain desire which threatened to lead us from the right path, but new temptations were added, and our feet became entangled in the snare. Like a reed moved by the wind, the wavering, inconsistent soul, is shaken when disturbed by passion. Would that we could extinguish within ourselves, for ever, this fickleness-this uncertain disposition, which places us, in appearance, among the deceitful.

Of what avail can it be, that we offer our devotions to the Eternal in the evening, and commend ourselves to the grace of our God, solemnly vowing that our reform shall be complete; what benefit can we expect, if, again, in our morning prayers, we think and speak as Christians, but, as the day advances, forget all our vows, and yield to every temptation that invites the heart to sin? not all our devotional exercises rendered a mere mockery by acting with such reprehensible levity? May it not be feared that such an affectation of religion aggravates our offence, while, after all, the world, to which we thus give ourselves up, forsakes us, and leaves us in the end to lament with empty hands, and sorrowful hearts, that we have been mournfully deluded, and can find comfort no where.

We feel, as we advance in life, that we are despised by the world. Where can we fly from its hatred and persecution? To thee, Oh, Father! we have no right to appeal, for we have not kept thy laws. Ourselves we cannot but scorn, and our bretheren value us not. Weak and unstable as we have proved, in matters intimately connected with our eternal welfare, of this we ought not to complain. Our purposes, often resolved upon, and as often changed, have only paved the way for pain and repentance. Had wisdom governed our conduct, purified our hearts, and conducted us into the right path, we might now have hymned thy praise, in strains of unbounded joy like those which angels know; but lamenting that such is not the case, we can only complain as sinners do; and where, Oh where, will our fickleness—where will our bitter regrets know an

Long bewildered in the mazes of the world, the time has now arrived, when profiting from the experience we have had, we ought to suffer ourselves to be misled no more. Looking back on what we have known in life, can we derive solid satisfaction from anything else, like that which is derived from the few instances we can recal, in which we have served God with zeal; and laboured with integrity, and kindness, to assist our fellow-men. Alas! turning our eyes on the path we have pursued, we look on a barren waste, diversified with but a few green spots of healthful vegetation, and, like the traveller in a boundless desert, see in the very dreariness of the way already travelled, but that which indicates the still more cheerless wilds to which we are

But, Oh gracious Lord! judge us not according to our folly. Let thy grace prove greater than our weakness. This evening we again exert ourselves to form resolves, which we hope will not prove unacceptable to thee. Glancing at the future, we can but too distinctly foresee the storms which will rage in our bosoms, and possibly again prevail Saviour of man! over our weakness. of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant us strength! Have mercy upon us, and enable us to gain true repose. Enable thy servants to prove themselves faithful; to prove that they fear thy frown, and love thy name. When the overwhelming wave of the passions would carry us from thee, graciously call us back to the paths of righteousness, by thy gentle inviting, or deter us from evil by thy sternly threatening reproof.

We now betake ourselves to rest. Grant that we may sink to refreshing slumber, soothed by the well-founded hope, that we shall, for the time to come, prove ourselves more worthy of thy love; and that finally we may belong wholly to thee. To-morrow, we fondly trust, will prove that our exercises of this evening have a salutary influence on our thoughts, words and actions, through the day.

TRIFLES ALARM THOSE WHO WANT GODLY FEAR.

If we receive the alarm of some approaching danger, how readily do we magnify the dreaded calamity beyond its real extent. Some persons indeed are so bold and daring, that they seem to rise above the influence of every fear, and to face danger and even death in all its forms, with a coolness and intrepidity which is truly astonishing. Yet, in general, this natural passion operates in almost every case of serious

apprehension but one, which of all others should awaken its sensibility.

We can fear almost any thing more than the wrath of God; and any event more than approaching death and judgment.

Strange infatuation and obduracy!

An unregenerate man will sit unmoved and unawed under the most awful displays of divine vengeance as exhibited in the preached word; whilst a slight shock of an earthquake, or the falling of a steeple, would cause him to start from his seat, and fly with fearful steps to some place of safety. Unbelief lies at the bottom of our indifference to eternal things; and is the true cause of that stupid unconcern, that fearless state of heart, which we manifest towards the infinitely important realities of a future world.

There are indeed checks of natural conscience, but these are transient and seldom felt, except when our misconduct has sensibly affected our worldly prospects, our health, our

reputation, or something of an earthly nature.

The immediate apprehension of death and judgment may

appal the sinner, and awaken all his solicitudes,

Like Felix, the proud worldling sometimes feels an involuntary tremor, an inward misgiving of heart: but, like him, he labours to overcome the painful sensation, by removing if possible the cause of his uneasiness: "go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Thus he goes on till death strikes the blow, and hurnes him into the abyss of endless horrors. Lord, deliver me from this awful state. How distressing that my foolish heart should be so little affected by those rich displays of divine grace; and those tremendous exhibitions of divine wrath, which are revealed in the word of God.

Blessed Lord! give me a stronger faith, that I may continually realize to my mind those great things which thou hast done, and still promisest to do for thy believing people; and a more solemn fear to those awful threatenings which thou hast denounced against thine enemies. Christian Retirement.

## MORNING.—APRIL 14.

TRUST IN THE PROMISES. When skies are dark, and tempests blow, And clouds discharge their rain, Appears in heaven the radiant bow, And all is bright again. Type of the promise kindly given To man in days of yore, That the incessant ire of Heaven Should drown the earth no more. So in the heart where sorrow dwells, And all is dark with care, One cheering beam the gloom dispels, And keeps away despair. When once that hallow'd light appears Athwart the clouds of woe, A glory shines in human tears, And gilds them as they flow. Like to the rainbow in the sky, When storms their fury dart. That other bow appears on high When storms are in the heart-"Trust in the promises of God;" It smiles amid the gloom, Lightens affliction's heaviest rod,

And cheers the darkest doom.

Hope of the World.

#### SILENT PRAYER EFFECTUAL. I SAMUEL, I.

9 ¶ So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord.

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the

Lord, and wept sore.

11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before

the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she spake in ner heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken?

put away thy wine from thee.

15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.

16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken

itherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

19 ¶ And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife: and the

Lord remembered her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, *saying*, Because I have asked him of the Lord.

# CHILD-LIKE CONFIDENCE IN GOD REQUIRED IN THE CHRISTIAN,

"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God." Thus says our Lord and Saviour. We could fain wish to become as children, in order that we may feel ourselves qualified to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Fain would we offer to the Most High, as a father, a clean heart, and a new and contrite spirit, as a thanksgiving offering -fain would we become worthy of his love, and entitled to his grace, by rendering true, sincere, child-like homage, to his law. But if we put the question to ourselves, are we so? how must we respond? Our souls are frightened, we feel depressed, and our confidence in God's mercy is shaken by a consciousness of our own depravity. We have acted inconsistently; we have wanted resolution to seek God's ways, and in us, the good work of conversion, is far, far from complete. We feel not in our bosoms that assurance of innocence, that feeling of dependance on our Father, who is above the sky; that humility and love, which are required from all who aspire to a place in the kingdom of heaven.

We often resolve on reform; on amending our course altogether, but still remain the same. Foolish and sinful emotions we detect in ourselves, nor can we help, at times, entertaining doubts which, alas! approach to a denial of thy goodness, of thy greatness, and of him, Oh God! whom thou hast in mercy sent to work out man's salvation.

And when in this way, or to this extent, we do not offend, still, when we ought to be tranquil and courageous, cheered and upheld by God's promises, we are melancholy, and disposed to abandon ourselves to despair. When severe visitations come upon us, instead of recognising the hand of a loving Parent, and bending with deep humility beneath the chastening rod, we franticly, weakly, rebelliously murmur, and mistrustfully inquire, "Is this eternal justice?" We almost presume to claim thy assistance, O Lord! as a matter of right, instead of imploring it as the boon of thy grace. Condescend to have mercy upon thy feeble-minded worshippers. Oh, teach our trembling steps the way in which we ought to move! Grant that we may grow, from day to day, more humble, faithful, and grateful; more devoted to thee, and more confident of thy goodness as we approach the close of our earthly career. Suffer not old age to attack us by surprise. We see throughout the whole range of the vegetable, sensible, and rational world, that whatever makes progress to maturity, having gained that point, soon gives evidence of approaching decay. As the stalk bends beneath the ripened ear of the golden grain, so must man, in his latter days, decline beneath the accumulation of years. This is the course ordained by God. Let us submit to it with a contented heart. Resist his will we cannot, and the wildest lamentation of unreasoning sorrow must prove of no avail.

Oh, that when sin is about to move within us, we could remember our duty, and say to ourselves in that moment—to act thus, would be to incur the displeasure of the dread being on whom our eternal destiny depends! Oh, that we could then wake from the sleep of reason and virtue, and pray, with holy confidence, in the goodness of our Lord! When doubts and fears distrust, let true Christians look back to the past, and from those instances which memory must supply, of bounty

heretofore extended to us, derive hope for the future, assured that that merciful government, and watchful Providence, which has preserved our lives, and saved us from calamity till this day. will not wholly and for ever forsake us now. Our Father has shewn us so much divine love from the moment when we first saw the light, that we ought not to doubt, while life continues, he will provide for our real welfare.

Frail as we are, we are not without apprehension, that our future lives will not present that improvement on the past, which they ought to exhibit, and bodily we may become as feeble and as helpless as we were in the days of our infancy. Strengthen, Oh Lord! our conviction, that under all circumstances, thou wilt still graciously watch over us. Guide and rule us as thou seest best, and never let us yield to pusillanimous misgivings. Should it be thy will that each of us shall presently be withdrawn from life, in thy infinite mercy, be pleased to ordain that the pangs of death may not be too severe for our weakness, and that we may pass serenely and thankfully into eternity, proving our faith, and glorifying our Redeemer. Hear this, our prayer, and grant that, as to confidence in the author of our being, and in the Saviour of the world, we may become as little children.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ALONE KNOWS REAL PEACE.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." It is his people only, who dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in

sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

The peace, which Christ bequeathed to his people, is further styled his peace. "Peace," says he, "I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." It is the same peace, that he himself enjoys; the same peace, that kept his soul serene in the midst of all his sorrows and trials upon earth: the same glorious rest, into which he is now entered in his Father's kingdom above.

As the precious oil, that was poured on the head of Aaron, went down to the skirts of his garments, so the joy poured on Jesus, as the head of his church, descends to all his members, and the meanest of his people share in his fulness. He is gone into the kingdom of peace and of glory, as the forerunner of his saints. They are said to be raised up together with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places. They have, in some degree, already entered into the joy of their Lord. Even in this house of their pilgrimage, they receive at seasons the first fruits of the Spirit, a portion of the happiness of their glorified Redeemer, a foretaste of the eternal rest, that remaineth for the people of God beyond the

Thus then the peace spoken of by Christ in the words before us is, first, peace with God, a share in that friendship,

which subsists between him and his well beloved Son: it is. secondly, inward peace, peace of mind, peace of the same kind as that, which Christ himself enjoys in his kingdom of glory. It is indeed inferior to it in degree, but it is of the same nature, and flows from the same living fountain, as the happiness of heaven.

Bradley.

## EVENING.—APRIL 14.

GOD'S PRESENCE IS LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

My God, the spring of all my joys. The life of my delights, The glory of my brightest days, And comfort of my nights.

In darkest shades if he appear, My dawning is begun: He is my soul's sweet morning star. And he my rising sun.

The opening heavens around me shine With beams of sacred bliss, While Jesus shows his heart is mine. And whispers, I am his.

My soul would leave this heavy clay At that transporting word, Run up with joy the shining way T' embrace my dearest Lord.

Watts.

#### SAMUEL CALLED WHILE ALONE. I SAMUEL III.

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lav down.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak; Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his

10 And the Lord came, and stood and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for

thy servant heareth.

## SOLITARY MOMENTS TO BE IMPROVED.

Man was not destined to be a solitary being. "Woe to him that is alone," is a solemn reflection, and each of us must feel that there are times and seasons when, from being alone, we are not only physically, but also morally exposed to dan-The Chinese have a saying, that "no man ought to regard himself as chaste, or correct, who would not remain so in all circumstances of his own free will, and none ought to think himself other than implacable, who would not leave his greatest enemy undisturbed, and uninjured, though he should find him sleeping and defenceless." They also hold, that he only is honest who could leave the gold of his neighbour untouched, though it should be in his power to carry it away unobserved, without fear of punishment.

Some peculiar dangers certainly assail the virtue of that man who is left to himself, undeterred by the presence or the advice of others from pursuing any evil courses the tempter of souls may suggest. He will frequently be led to brood over wicked schemes, and to plot crimes which, if engaged in the ordinary cares of business, and of society, would not have occurred to him, or been for a moment entertained. Woe to such an one, if he is alone, for to him active employment, and association with others, would prove a medicine of the mind: and therefore, the law of brotherly love commands that care should be taken to give an offending brother the advantages of society.

It is not, however, to be understood, that solitude is at all times dangerous. To many, it is often a source of pure and healthful recreation, a grateful resting time, which enables the mind to recover from the cares and toils of the world. He who cannot indulge in it, often becomes a victim to selfishness, and cannot feel the whole value of his powers. The distractions and bustle of life, will often preclude us from thinking of ourselves; in solitude, the case is different, and we can mediate on what most intimately concerns our welfare, and doing so, we often gain true views of our own past life, and of the vast importance of preparing for a future state.

It is in the hour of solitude that the unbeliever finds himself deserted by all his assumed courage which led him to believe himself superior to the influence of religion, while in dissipated company. It forces his thoughts to look inwardly, and then he is often terrified at what he discovers in himself, for the whisper of the monitor in his

bosom, hitherto suppressed, while reminding him of the past, announces, in language not to be mistaken, the coming of an awful future. The lonely inhabitant of a prison; he who takes solitary journeys; the sufferer on a sick bed, or even he who is stretched on the ordinary, nightly couch, is often awakened from the slumber of conscience, to feel its secret reproaches keenermore hardly to be endured than the loudest. fiercest reproof from without.

For the thoughtless, it would be well that they should take a solitary ramble for a few hours, among the tombs of the departed. There, while they contemplate what those who are deposited beneath their feet have now become, and what they themselves, must shortly be, the mind, feeling all the importance of the theme, will awake to holy reflection, from which it may profit more largely than ever it did from the most mirthful associates, or from the most brilliant so-Then will the student learn how to seek peace with God, through the merits of a Saviour; reason will invite devotion, and sincere thansgivings will ascend to Heaven, for that bountiful love which has spared the sinner so long, and still graciously awards him a season for meditation and repentance. Then the mind will become strengthened, and the heart be eventually assured of mercy, through the merits of a Redeemer. and prepared to enter "the valley of the shadow of death," relying that Christ will support him with his staff, and defend him with his rod.

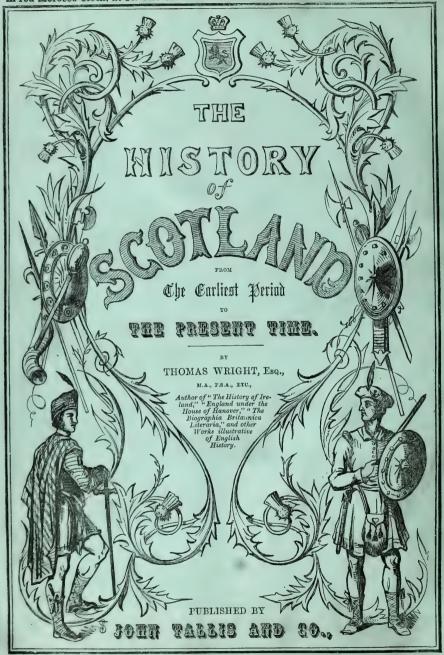
When these effects are produced, it may be said -"well is it for him who is alone." Then will each of us approach thee, Oh God, in the solitude and darkness of night. In such seasons, we have often been visited with salutary reflections and beneficial thoughts. We shall do well, like the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who resigned his crown that he might gain a wholesome intermediate space, between life and death-if we endeavour to obtain a short space of time from the business of the passing day, to give to solemn meditation on eternal things. This will tend to keep our faith in a healthful state. He who, exhausted by labour, drowsily undresses, and throws himself on his bed, nearly in a state of insensibility, is almost like a man who stupifies himself by habitual intoxication, and, though he may attempt a prayer, he will scarcely be conscious of what he utters. We shall act well daily to seek an opportunity, when all is silent around, to examine ourselves, and to implore the assistance of the Deity. Then



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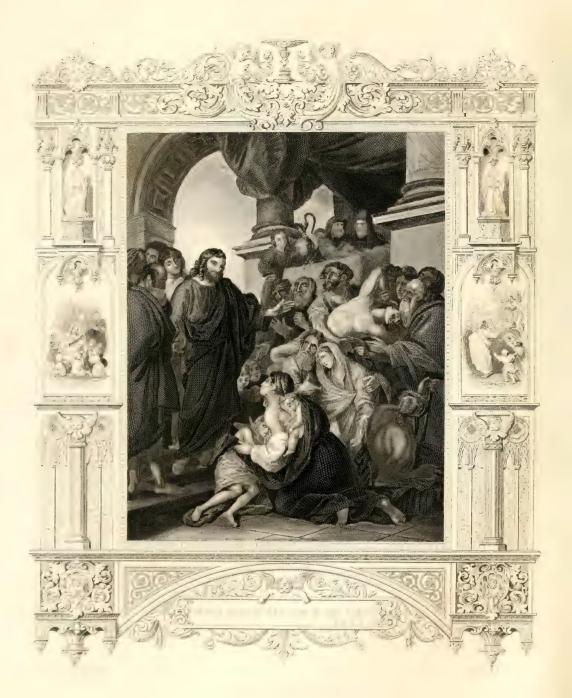
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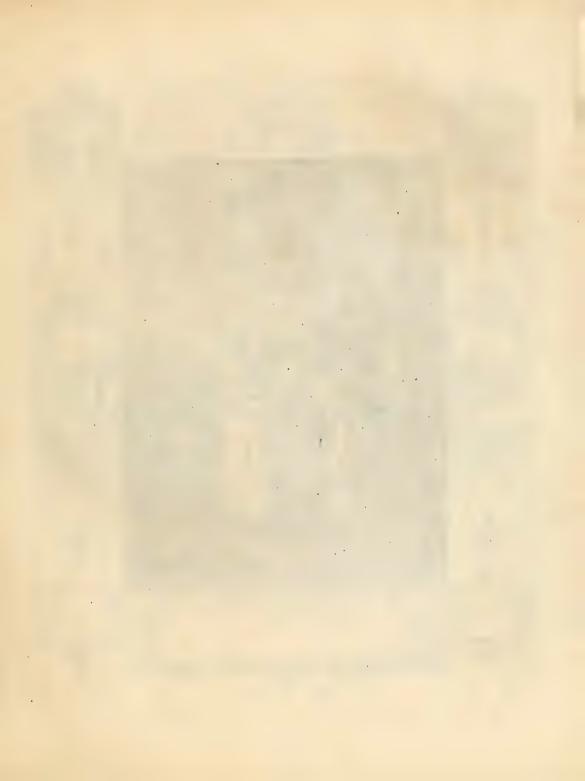
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will the reproaches of conscience be heard for our past misdeeds, and we shall begin to pray with fervour and sincerity. Such exercise will insure peace of mind. We shall feel that angels rejoice, and that God approves seeing us so occupied. In our home of solitude let us turn to the Lord, and he will incline a favouring ear to our petitions. He will look with pleasure on the heart which seeks him-his voice will speak to us-we shall listen—he will bless us, and sweet repose must be ours.

SORROWS AND ADVANTAGES OF SOLITUDE.

Doom'd, as I am, in solitude to waste The present moments, and regret the past; Depriv'd of every joy I valued most, My friend torn from me, and my mistress lost; Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious mien, The dull effect of humour, or of spleen i Still, still, I mourn, with each returning any Him snatch'd by fate in early youth away. And her-thro' tedious years of doubt and pain, Fix'd in her choice, and faithful—but in vain! O prone to pity, generous, and sincere, Whose eye ne'er yet refus'd the wretch a tear: Whose heart the real claim of friendship knows, Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes See me-ere yet my destin'd course half done, Cast forth a wand rer on a world unknown! See me neglected on the world's rude coast, Each dear companion of my voyage lost!

The writer however profited from solitude, and courted retirement. From December 1763, to the following July, the sensitive mind of Cowper appears to have laboured under the severest suffering of morbid depression: but the medical skill of Dr. Cotton, and the cheerful, benignant, manners of that accomplished physician, gradually succeeded, with the blessing of Heaven, in removing the indescribable load of eligious despondency, which had clouded the faculties of this interesting man. His ideas of religion were changed from the gloom of terror and despair to the brightness of inward

This juster and happier view of evangelical truth is said to have arisen in his mind while he was reading the third chapter of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The words that rivetted his attention were the following: " Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the for-bearance of God." Rom. iii. 25. It was to this passage, which contains so lucid an exposition of the Gospel method of salvation, that, under the divine blessing, the poet owed the recovery of a previously disordered intellect and the removal of a load from a deeply oppressed conscience—he saw, by a new and powerful perception, how sin could be pardoned, and the sinner be saved-that the way appointed of God was through the great propitiation and sacrifice upon the crossthat faith lays hold of the promise, and thus becomes the instrument of conveying pardon and peace to the soul.

It is remarkable how God, in every age, from the firs tpromulgation of the Gospel to the present time, and under all the various modifications of society, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, has put his seal to this fundamental doctrine of the

Gospel.

Whether we contemplate man amid the polished scenes of civilized and enlightened Europe, or the rude ferocity of savage tribes, whether it be the refined Hindoo, or the unlettered Hottentot, whose mind becomes accessible to the power and influences of religion, the cause and the effect are the same. It is the doctrine of the cross that works the mighty change, The worldly wise may reject this doctrine, the spiritually wise comprehend and receive it. But, whether it be rejected, with all its tremendous responsibilities, or received with its inestimable blessings, the truth itself still remains unchanged and unchangeable, attested by the records of every church and the experience of every believing heart—" the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Cor. i. 18.

It is impossible not to admire the power, and adore the mercy that thus wrought a double deliverance in the mind of Cowper by a process so remarkable. Devout contemplation became more and more dear to his reviving spirit. Resolving to relinquish all thoughts of a laborious profession, and all intercourse with the busy world, he acquiesced in a plan of

settling at Huntingdon.

Cowper '

## MORNING,-APRIL 15.

THE STAR OF HOPE.

Though travelling through a wilderness, Where duty's call divides us; Though many a wintry storm distress, The star of hope shall guide us.

And this shall cheer the lonely way. And gild the gloom of sorrow; And, through the shades of paring day, Point to a brighter morrow.

E'en should this star be clouded here. And should we meet—ah! never, The transient joys of life to share-'Twill not be dimm'd for ever.

No !-we shall meet, though parted here, To part again-oh, never ! But, joyful, with our Saviour there To spend a long for ever.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

THE GOSPEL SUPERIOR TO ALL WORLDLY WISDOM. I COR. I.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness: but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,

25 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

### THE GOSPEL MAN'S BEST COMFORT.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." This assurance we find in the Bible, and we, ourselves, can testify to its truth. Our spirits have proved it since they have been awake to the merits of Christ. As the body requires those viands which ordinarily constitute its food, so the soul cannot rest without that nutriment which is afforded by the word of God. our hearts the promises of that word are the everflowing sources of comfort and hope. That it is such to others, a glance at history, and thousands of instances furnished by contemporaries, serve to prove. Their experience proclaims that the most valuable goods,-the most perfect enjoyment of goods, is wanting to that soul which does not habitually draw faith and consolation, love and hope, from the revelation of God

In our hearts it is sensibly felt that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. It contains everything that can arrest the attention of all classes of men. doctrines are so plain, its truths so evident, its promises so comforting, that they elevate the spirits, and satisfy the understanding of the highly learned, as well as the most illiterate and uncultivated member of the human family. Though a thousand times heard and reflected upon, the subject does not lose its interest in the slightest degree. The power of the truths it contains cannot be frittered away, and its importance appeals to the heart. The wonderful influences with which they first struck and comforted us, continues to be felt, and indeed the gospel becomes dearer to us, and more effective, the more it is intimately known. Our hearts would, in a manner, feel starved out; would pine away as those of

others have done, deprived of their holy nourishment. We, indeed, should be almost degraded to the state of brute animals, if so many spirits from the word of God did not attract and call us from earth to heaven. The consciousness of our depravity would throw us into despair, did not so many passages in the gospel give forth their light to illuminate and dispel the gloom in which we are enveloped.

It is only the gospel which makes us acquainted with the dignity of human nature, which makes us conscious of our importance in the scale of creation, and renders us children of light. Without it we should be strangers to the value of reasonable conversation and sober discourse. Men would only seek happiness in wild excesses, and in gross enjoyments, which the vilest animal is as capable of realising as man, though created in the image of his Maker. Such was the case with the heathens of ancient days. Idle pleasures, which vanish with the passing moment, and which can only be recollected with humiliation and sorrow, were deemed the all of happiness which men could know, and the perfection of reason and philosophy was supposed to be comprehended in the phrase, "Let us eat and drink to day, for to-morrow we die.

Dear, then, as it is sacred, let the light of the gospel ever be to us while we continue to breathe. The cross, that symbol of our Redeemer's goodness and glory, and of our own salvation, of which we there read, shall be ever regarded by us with sacred care. The reformation so essential to our future happiness, which we so gain, shall be gratefully treasured, and constantly borne in mind. Happy ourselves in a knowledge of the blessings procured for us by the merits of a crucified Saviour, that happiness we will endeavour to increase, by extending the knowledge of Christ's goodness to others. When we beholdourfellow men sitting in the gloomy shades of death, the spectacle shall move us to pray that they may participate in our felicity, and to use every effort in our power to accomplish that object. It shall also be our petition to the throne of grace, that those who till now have been merely nominal Christians in a Christian land, may in common with the ignorant heathen in distant regions of the globe, receive the commandments of God in Christ, that they may experience how much that faith, which will save all mankind from perdition, can comfort and sustain the heart of the anxious sojourner in this world of care and sorrow.

#### THE CONVERTED SINNER.

Quintus Septimus Florens Tertullianus, was the son of a Centurion under the Proconsul of Africk, born at Carthage about the year 160; of heathen parentage, and of heathen education; he had a head marvellously well turned for science, and his extensive genius soon led him the round of human learning; he had dived into the secrets of geometry and physic, and studied the poets and philosophers through and through; he was a great master of history, and above all, as Eusebius tells us, and as from the apology is evident, profoundly versed in the Roman laws, he was naturally exceeding hot and impatient, a temper he very much laments in his Book of Patience; to this natural stock of fire, and the joint force of letters, was added a surprizing vivacity of wit, edged with a keenness peculiar to himself, so that he could drive an argument as far by dint of reason, and clinch it as severely by dint of wit, as most men living; for in the Psalmist's phrase, His teeth were spears and arrows, and his tongue a sharp sword; which by his own confession, in his merry fits, he had often drawn against the true God, and shot his most bitter words against the Christian religion: and as the greatest wits are not always the strictest livers, so had he copied but too closely after the Gods he worshipped, for he acknowledges himself not only an adulterer, but one who had taken a cruel pleasure in the bloody entertainments of the Amphitheatre, one who had arrived to a distinguishing eminency in vice, and was an accomplished sinner in all respects. In a word, no man seems deeper learned in the mystery of iniquity, in the rise and progress of superstition, and in the creditable abominations of the age, than our Tertullian in his gentle state; and as a person of such ability and standing in vice was not likely to surrender upon easy terms, and become a convert to a most holy and suffering religion, without the clearest and strongest conviction, so after his conversion was no man better appointed to reason and ridicule the heathen gods, and the heathen immortalities quite out of the world.

Concerning the prime motives and manner of his conversion, we have nothing express, either from himself, or the ancients; but as we naturally feel ourselves most apt to dilate and dwell upon such motives, as most inwardly affect us; so what we find this convert most warmly and emphatically urging in the defence of Christianity, we may reasonably conjecture to have had the mightiest operation on himself. We see then this Author most triumphantly insisting upon the antiquity of the Mosaic writings, with the mighty works and wisdom of that law-giver; upon the successive links of prophecy, which make up one long chain of continued wonders, that will conduct an inquisitive Spirit directly to Christ, with an evidence as illustrious, as that of the star which went before the wise men, till it came and stood over where the

Justin Martyr.

## EVENING.—APRIL 15.

young child was.

SAINTS IN HEAVEN.

What are these in bright array?
This innumerable throng,
Round the altar, night and day,
Tuning their triumphant song?
—"Worthy is the Lamb once slain,
Blessing, honour, glory, power,
Wisdom, riches to obtain,
New dominion every hour."

These through fiery trials trod;
These from great affliction came:
Now before the throne of God,
Scal'd with his eternal name,
Clad in raiment pure and white,
Victor-palms in every hand,
Through their great Redeemer's might
More than conquerors they stand.

Hunger, thirst, disease, unknown,
On immortal fruits they feed;
Them, the Lamb, amidst the throne,
Shall to living fountains lead;
Joy and gladness banish sighs,
Perfect love dispels their fears,
And for ever, from their eyes,
God shall wipe away all tears.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

MAKE YOURSELVES LIGHTS OF THE WORLD. PHIL. II.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:
15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of

God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

### ASSOCIATE WITH THE PIOUS.

We are enjoined in scripture to associate with pious people. The wisdom of the injunction, if we would shun evil, is proved to us by our every-day experience. We feel that the society of the good and the wise, the friendly intercourse with the just, their sympathy and their consolations in the hour of suffering, give joy to the heart, and are among the purest blessings of life. Their esteem rouses our energies, and renders us equal to virtuous actions, which might otherwise be above our

strength, and applause at once rewards what has already been effected, and encourages to renewed meritorious efforts; and, with happy experience, feel, we from their rational converse, our intellects are improved.

Since such the advantages we know from communicating with pious contemporaries, how great will be our delight in a future state, when we find ourselves united to the best men of all times and of all nations, made perfect, while surrounding angels swell the glorious throng, and lift us to communion with our Saviour, and with the Al-

mighty himself.

It is sweet to dwell on the bliss that must there await the emancipated spirit. Delightful must it be to find ourselves thus associated; and what happiness must we prove again to look on those beloved and dear ones, whom we have seen descend into the grave before us, and mourned as lost in unavailing woe. What a meeting! what a happy re-union will that be. There we can no longer dread separation or death. The felicity which will then be ours can be disturbed by no apprehension—our bliss will be eternal.

The acknowledged heirs of glory, there we shall be ever as ready to sing the praises, as we are now prone to forget the goodness of our God. We shall behold, with sacred delight, unmixed with earth-born envy, the joy experienced by spirits who were once the companions of our terrestrial pilgrimage. If sorrow can be known there at all, it must be because, in certain instances, a link will be missed, from some of our worldly friends having been "found wanting in the balance." If the blessed can grieve, if they love not the glory of God, to the exclusion of all cares for flesh and blood, how painful would it be to find the once fondly-beloved child for ever separated from its parent. But great and learned men have believed that this will not be; that the mercy of God will eventually extend to all; and that even the rejected will find pardon, after receiving appropriate punishment, and be permitted to enter the church of blessed spirits. Such a hope has associated with Christian faith. All-gracious Father! if such thy good pleasure, how can man be sufficiently grateful? Oh! let us not be deceived. Let thy light shine upon us, that we, by observing thy ordinances, and by attuning our hearts to piety, may render our calling and election sure. May God, in his goodness, grant that we shall not be found among the rejected. We will at all events look higher, and hope to be numbered among the blessed. To that end it shall be our object to associate with holy friends,—with those who would fain live in communion with the Apostles, and with the Saviour of man. We will seek to tread in the steps of the good departed, and aspire to be numbered with the saints above, there to be associated with them through all eternity.

#### ENDURING VALUE OF EARLY PIOUS ASSOCIATIONS.

Sir Philip Sydney, in 1586, while governor of Flushing, and serving under his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, was mortally wounded at the battle of Zutphen, a strong town in Guelderland, then besieged by the Spaniards. After lingering at Arnheim-whither he was carried-for sixteen days, passed in much bodily pain, mitigated as far as possible by his watchful lady, Sir Philip died in the arms of his dear friend Mr. William Temple, Oct. 16, 1586; contrary to the expectation of his surgical attendants, who fully calculated on the certainty of his recovery; but in entire accordance with his own presentiments, for he from the first looked upon his wound as mortal, and at length he declared that he smelt the smell of death upon him. His bravery upon this memorable occasion was beyond all praise, and shewed that he was no timid warrior. Seeing Lord Willoughby surrounded by the enemy and in imminent danger, he rushed forward to rescue him. Having accomplished his purpose, he continued the fight with great spirit. His horse having fallen under him, he mounted another, and advanced to a repetition of the attack, when a musket-ball shattered his thigh above the knee.

The account of his last hour is peculiarly interesting. It sets forth the value and importance of the gospel, as the only true support in the prospect of fast hastening dissolutionas providing that balm which can alone alleviate the torture of the wound of sin. To those who attended him, "he made such a confession of Christian faith as no book but the heart can truly and feelingly deliver." "He then desired them to accompany him in prayer, wherein he besought to lead the assembly; as he said the secret sins of his own heart were best known to himself, and out of that true sense he could more properly apply the eternal sacrifice of our Saviour's passions and merits to himself. In this his sighs and tears were for ever interrupting their common devotions. Instantly after prayer, he entreated those divine philosophers about him to deliver the opinion of the ancient heathen, touching the immortality of the soul; to see what true knowledge she retains of her own essence out of the light of herself; and then to parallel it with the most pregnant authorities of the Old and New Testaments, as supernatural revelation for the divine guidance of faith and works: not that he wanted instruction or assurance, but because this fixing of a lover's thoughts upon these eternal beauties cheered up his decaying spirits, and was, as it were, a taking possession of the immortal inheritance which was given to him by his brotherhood in Christ." Afterwards he called for music, especially the song which himself had entitled "La Cuisse rompue;" partly, I conceive, to shew that the glory of mortal flesh was shaken in him, and by that music itself to fashion his heavenly soul into that everlasting harmony of angels, of which these concords were a kind of terrestrial echo. His parting words to his brother were, "Love my memory; cherish my friends: their faith to me may insure you that they are honest. But, above all, govern your will and affection by the will and word of your Creator; in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities."

May not much of that religious principle, for which he was distinguished, be ascribed to the pious custom referred to by Jonson, of the family "each morn and even," being taught to "pray with the whole household;" for who can tell what an influence it may have in after years? The daily sacrifice of the household altar is often remembered with delight in far distant lands, where no other save those of heathenism are erected, where religious privileges are few, and the means of grace comparatively scanty.

Church of England Magazine.

## MORNING.—APRIL 16

### WHY SHRINK FROM DEATH ?

Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene?
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between:
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms:
Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms;
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence!"
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray;
Again exalt the brute and sink the man;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

O thou great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea:
With that controlling power assist ev'n me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine;
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line;
O, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence divine!

Burns.

GOD IN HIS OWN TIME WILL BLESS HIS PEOPLE. JOEL II.

21 Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things.

22 Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

24 And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker worm, and the caterpiller, and the palmer worm, my great army which I sent among you.

26 And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise

the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be ashamed.

27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

### CHEERFUL ENJOYMENT A CHRISTIAN DUTY

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." This easily-understood truth we have on scripture authority. It ought to be more present generally to the minds of reflecting men than it is; for how many are there who have been largely benefited by the loving kindness of God, who enjoy the good things of the earth in abundance, but are still striving with ceaseless anxiety for greater wealth, incapable of enjoying what has already been largely bestowed.

Have not we ourselves, surrounded by the comforts of life, frequently been depressed by melancholy ideas, and weak repinings at the dispensations of Providence? Tormented by a sinful spirit of discontent, we do not enjoy what the Lord has bountifully granted, but frequently craved what in wisdom it has been his good pleasure to withhold. Why are we thus tormented? Such a state of mind it is ours to correct.

Do we say that we are unable to control this flow of sadness, the fearful apprehension that comes over us? This must not be. We can do any thing through him that makes us strong—who is our best support. Had we learnt of Christ, the true Spirit of philosophy and patience, we should not be thus affected. If we were entirely his, we should have known content, and our cheerfulness would never be disturbed, while looking forward from this transitory state of being, to a life that can have no end.

Oh! that our thoughts rested more on that example which Jesus has left the world! In all his steps we trace meekness, enduring patience; gentleness, and love. His comprehensive benevolence would spurn no sinner; none were by him denounced as castaways; he came to work the salvation of all. He loved mankind, he suffered for their sins, and he rose from the tomb, to assure the sufferers here, of a joyous immortality hereafter.

But little have we exercised our hearts in those virtues of which we find in his life a pattern so sublime. We have allowed ourselves to be carried away by vain discontents, for which we had no real cause but now, aware that cheerful-

4 Y

ness becomes the Christian, we will throw off the habit of complaining because all is not, at the moment, what we could have desired to see. To appreciate the advantages we enjoy, through the permission of our Lord, we ought to regard as no unimportant part of our duty—as that which is inseparable from true religion.

All his gifts we will henceforth value, and more especially those which, till now, we have little regarded, and have received and enjoyed, without

heeding the giver.

Now, too, must it be our daily wish to manifest increasing confidence in the goodness of the Creator; and this we must do, by labouring to

purify our hearts.

Most of the sorrows, and certainly most of the distressing alarms which we experience, are the consequences of neglected duty, and of our proneness to sin. To feel happy, we must act better. Yet, in the day of sorrow, we are too much in the habit of forgetting how much the Lord has done for us. Such weakness, O heavenly Father! without thy gracious aid, we shall be unable to correct. To thee we look for the power of self-control. Do not forsake us, Almighty God! but indulgently listen to our prayer!

Open our eyes, that we may humbly but confidently look up to the Author of our being, and Finisher of our faith. In thee we place our trust, and seeking to imitate our Lord and Saviour, we hope to find strength. As obedient children, we will this day, and henceforth, to the end of our lives, strive to walk before God. Our lives shall be spotless, and we will at all times, and under all circumstances, fly from sin. Acting thus, thou wilt not refuse to bestow upon us thy grace. In the course of our journey, when our pains are most severe, thy compassion will alleviate them; and when in death we call upon thee, thou wilt not refuse us thy pardon and thy blessing.

## VOUCHERS FOR THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

The Jews universally, and with a kind of impatience expected his coming, how much soever they were afterwards offended in him, because he did not appear with that external pomp and grandeur which was agreeable to the idea they had of a secular dominion, which they vainly fancied he should then erect: Their language was to this purpose; "Why are his chariot wheels so long a coming, until the day break, and the shadows flee away? Make haste my beloved, and be like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains." And it is plain, that they understood those predictions that related to the time of his appearing, as what should be fulfilled in the age in which he was born, and therefore, if any pretended to

the character of the Messiah, especially if they were disposed to make tumults and insurrections, as some did, there were multitudes ready to adhere to them, as the Jewish historian observes, though it were to their own ruin. And indeed. they were so full of this matter, that they could not conceal it from the heathen, with whom they conversed, which gave occasion to them to mention it as what they had received by tradition from the Jews, and was commonly reported among them, that a great King was to appear at that time, who should make vast changes in the world, which raised their jealousy, as fearing that something might come to pass which would endanger the ruin of the Roman empire. Whereas indeed, our Saviour did not design to erect a kingdom that was of this world, but such as was of a spiritual nature, and bring the heathen to embrace that faith, which was to be publicly proclaimed, and established in the gospel-dispensation, and not to destroy them by force of arms, which he did not give the least encouragement to his followers to do.

Thus Christ's coming into the world to save sinners was expected, pursuant to what was predicted concerning it; which, if we compare with the gospel-history, we shall find that what is therein recorded is exactly agreeable thereunto; and the truth thereof is established by the testimony of those who were eye-witnesses to what they reported, having had the honour of an intimate conversation of our Saviour; and they were men of an unspotted character, therefore what they imparted to the world cannot reasonably be denied or disbe-

lieved by any.

Moreover the testimony that was given to Christ's mission was divine, inasmuch as every miracle that was wrought was of that kind, and therefore sufficient to excite a divine faith; and the witness of the apostles, that such miracles were wrought, and that what is related in the gospels concerning our Saviour was true, was as good an evidence as we could expect or desire. The persons who attested these things, and were sent to publish the gospel to the world, were chosen by him to be witnesses of his resurrection from the dead, on which all the other branches of the Christian religion depend. These were men who had no sinister ends in view, nor indeed was it possible for them to promote their secular interest thereby: on the other hand, they were given to expect, when first called to this service, to be hated of all men for his name's sake; and to do this not only at their peril, but at the loss of their very lives. And as this was sufficient to establish their sincerity and faithfulness in the report they gave, so they were not destitute of a divine testimony by miracles, added to their own, which was a means, attended with the peculiar blessing of the Spirit of God, to propagate the gospel through the world, and bring many to the obedience Dr. Ridgley

## EVENING .-- APRIL 16.

#### RESURRECTION FROM THE GRAVE.

Let not vain fears disturb our peace,
Because in nature's course we die;
For when our earthly beings cease,
It will be ours to live on high

And there, before th' eternal throne, Secure from sickness, strife, and storms, We shall by friends again be known, Revived in cleansed and nobler forms. There all the sorrows of this life No more our movements will attend: But holy peace, remote from strife. Will there be ours, and know no end.

The feeble mind alone desponds, That these frail bodies sink to dust; Hope, sacred hope, spurns mortal bonds, To seek the spirits of the just.

ALL THAT IS NOW CONCEALED FROM US. WILL ONE DAY BE KNOWN. I. COR. XIII.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.
11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood

as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I

put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also as I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.

## THERE IS A LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

"I live, ye shall live also," says our Lord. This declaration, in its fullest extent, nature confirms. The butterfly, now seen bounding over the meadows, was in the last month a mean, grovelling, almost lifeless caterpillar: the rich and waving glory of the corn-field, produced out of the apparently perishing seed; the daily bread which we eat, and numerous other witnesses in nature, serve to confirm the promise of our Lord, tend to prove his power to console and sustain all things; since it is his pleasure, that as he lives, we shall live also.

Nor is the promise to be regarded as confined to the present life. Our conceptions of the Almighty would be very unworthy of his greatness, could we doubt of a resurrection from the dead. Can it in reason be supposed that he has no wish to resuscitate us—he who planted in us a longing for continued existence? Surely the Deity who bestowed upon us souls too great to be satisfied with the things of time, must have destined us to live through eternity. Do we ask, Has he the power to grant us so mighty a boon? Of that we cannot doubt. Let the winds of heaven scatter the particles of dust, of which these our mortal frames are composed, north, south, east, and west,—let economising nature employ the same material in new combinations, to form thousands of other bodies, and still the omnipotence of God will be able to give us, when it is his pleasure to bid us revive to life, a more exquisite body, and to continue our existence with a consciousness of having existed before.

It may be that the departing spirit is never seen by mortal eyes; that its voice is never heard by human ears; still God will safely convey it to its new abode, where it is to rest for ever.

Lord Jesus! thy servants believe in thy word. and thou hast told them that, as thou livest, they shall live also. Let not the timid heart, then, throb with apprehension, lest it should not rise again from the grave. That we shall do so is past conjecture; scripture assures us of the important fact; and all things seen and known by us, tend to establish it.

Then Oh! let our souls disdain to occupy themselves with trifling enjoyments, and boldly aspire to the sky. If unavoidably oppressed by earthly cares, let the bright inheritance which is ours cheer the sufferer, and teach him that the present affliction cannot last! while the felicity which he will gain in another life, cannot know an end. The mourner ought to weep no longer; the painful dispensation which may have distressed him, will not always be severely felt. must be more than consoled by the conviction that the loved ones will again be found in heaven, whom he has lamented were snatched away by death. There, in an improved state, with enlarged powers, he will meet the Saviour, face to face. Let the world, then, be regarded but as an object of minor importance, while the glory of the higher state of being reserved for us, is unceasingly present to our minds. So shall our hearts be cheered, and nothing in the course of life will have sufficient importance in our eyes, seriously to excite our desires, or disturb our peace.

But, Lord God of mercy! do we not presume too far, looking forward to eternity in our present state? Are we ripe for a better state of being? We are not sufficiently spiritual to be prepared for those enjoyments which await thy children in We will hasten to improve ourselves, to recover what we have lost; we will carefully cultivate our minds, and sow more good seed on the field of our spirits. We will labour to reform our actions, and to refine our thoughts; and while thus inspiring ourselves, not to ourselves shall our efforts be confined. We will endeavour to communicate the blessing we seek to others; that they with us may finally enjoy the peace of heaven, and join with the seraphim to sing,

"Worthy the Lamb!"

MEANNESS OF EARTHLY GLORY—DEATH OF THE GREAT CONDÉ.

Having thrown himself into the arms of his God, he calmly awaited his mercy, and continued to implore his succour till he expired. It is here that we may give vent to our just grief for the loss of so great a man! but, for the love of truth, and to shame those who are obstinately blind, listen to the glorious testimony he paid to religion on his death-bed! He was informed by his confessor, that if our hearts are not entirely such as the Almighty demands, we must implore God to mould them as be pleases, and repeat these pious words of David; "Create in me a clean heart, oh God!" At these words the prince made a pause, as if struck with some important thought, then calling the holy father, who had suggested that pious sentiment, he said; "I never doubted of the mysteries of religion, whatever people may have said." Christians, you ought to believe him, for persons in his condition owe only truth to the world. "But," continued he, "my faith is more than ever confirmed," "These truths," added he, with exquisite emotion, "fully unveil themselves to my comprehension! Yes, we shall see God, as he is, face to face?" He repeated these awful words in Latin, Sicuti est, facie ad faciem, with heartfelt fervor, and it was admirable to behold him in that sweet extasy. What then passed in his mind? What new light broke upon him? What sudden ray pierces the mist of night, and in a moment dispels the ignorance of the senses, darkness itself, and, if I may be allowed the expression, the holy obscurity of our faith? What then becomes of those lofty titles by which our vanity is flattered? At the approach of so bright a day, and the first radiance of so vivid a light, how instantly the phantoms of the world vanish! How gloomy is the splendour of the greatest victory, how worthless mundane glory appears, and how we regret that our eyes have been thus dazzled! Come, people, now come; but rather approach ye princes and Lords, ye who judge the earth, and ye who open the gates of heaven to man; and you, princes and princesses, who are the noble descendants of so many kings, bright luminaries of France, though now under the eclipse of sorrow, come and see the little which remains of birth so august, grandeur so exalted, and glory so eminent! Cast your eyes around! Behold all that piety and magnifi-cence can combine to pay honour to a hero. Titles, inscrip-tions, vain emblems of that which no longer exists, figures which seem to weep round a tomb, and fragile images of grief, which, like the rest, must perish by the hand of time, columns that seem to rise in immortal testimony of our nonentity; nothing, in fine, is wanting to complete this august spectacle, but the presence of him to whom these honours are rendered! Weep then over this feeble wreck of human existence!

De Bossuet.

# MORNING.—APRIL 17.

WE FALL TO RISE AGAIN.

Then, Death, why shouldst thou dreaded be,
And shunn'd as some great misery?
That cur'st our woes and strife;
Only because we're ill resolv'd,
And in dark error's clouds involv'd,
Think death the end of life;
Which most untrue,
Each place we view,
Gives testimonies rife.

The flowers that we behold each year,
In checquer'd meads their heads to rear
New rising from the tomb;
The eglantines and honey-daisies,
And all those pretty smiling faces,
That still in age grow young;
Even these do cry,
That though men die,
Yet life from death may come.

The towering cedars tall and strong,
On Taurus, and mount Lebanon,
In time they ell decay;
Yet from their old and wasted roots,
At length again grow up young shoots,
That are as fresh and gay;
Then why should we
Thus fear to die,
Whose death brings life for aye?

The seed that in the earth we throw Doth putrefy before it grow,
Corrupting in its urn;
But at the spring it flourisheth,
When Phœbus only cherisheth
With life at his return.
Doth Time's Sun this?
Then sure it is
Time's Lord can more perform.

Haythorpe.

BEWARE OF BEING ENTANGLED IN EARTHLY SNARES.
LUKE, XXI.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my word shall

34.¶ And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on

the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

#### LET US GIVE UP ALL FOR HEAVEN.

"I beseech you that you present your bodies a living sacrifice," was the pious call made by a holy man, on the earlier followers of our Lord. Can the suggestion be deemed extravagant, when we remember that those bodies were given to us by God, and therefore, in presenting them to him, we can but offer him his own. We, however, are not required to offer ourselves in the way of sacrifice, taking the word in its ordinary acceptation; but the happy sensations of life and health which we experience when we rise in the morning, refreshed by that sleep, which, under divine protection, we have enjoyed through the night, must invite the heart to devote itself to the Giver

of all good, with songs of joy, and strains of love and gratitude. This invitation we will follow; and as it is our first duty to submit to thy dispensations, Oh Lord! without repining, it ought to be our highest happiness to feel ourselves entirely thine. He alone who altogether resigns himself up to thee, Oh Father! body and soul, is not an ungrateful disparager of thy blessings; and he alone can look for thy assistance in all the circumstances which may perplex him in

his progress through time, to eternity.

Guarded by thy almighty arm, by thy paternal care, what is there on earth that ought to create alarm? Our fate is governed by thy will, and thy grace and goodness are unfailing; thy truth is firm and unshaken. What more can rational beings desire, for their present peace, and future welfare, than to know that thou lookest upon them with the love of a Father; and to feel persuaded that they are the objects of thy tenderest mercy? And of this we can be certain, if we offer ourselves a living sacrifice. There is bliss in the thought, O God, to be certain of thee! On earth it is happiness to possess a faithful and sympathising friend. We derive the sweetest comfort from converse with a fellow-creature so disposed; but how much more ennobling and delightful must it be to find that we have our God for our friend! If we are beloved by thee, our Creator; if we are thy children, and regarded as such, we have all that ought to render us content and happy.

Nor is the satisfaction thence arising, likely to prove transient. In those gloomy moments when we find ourselves deprived by death of the mortals most dear to our love; when friends, relations, patrons and companions, are all withdrawn, and when nothing remains to ourselves but a small spot of earth in the cemetery, the Lord will still be with us; he will soothe and cheer the sorrowing heart, restore it to hope, and console us for every loss we have had to deplore.

But while such our conviction, such our expectations from the bounty of the Deity, we are conscious—and sore is the reflection—that from him we are frequently far away. Our love and confidence fail; sinful doubts disturb our minds; and thy decrees, mysterious and inexplicable, are regarded with complaining distrust. Then do we pray with anything but that fervour which we should know, if we were truly thy own. And why is this? Is it mean pusillanimity or foolish pride, that keeps us from the Author of our

being, even in those moments when we attempt to offer him the homage of our adoration? Is it the working of sin in the contaminated bosom, that makes us look with horror and despondency on the threatening future, and that causes us to groan with vain impatience under the ordinary cares and burdens of human life?

Cleanse, we beseech thee, our hearts, O Lord! from the besetting sins of which we are conscious, but which, of ourselves, we cannot put away. Remove far from us the disposition, if not the opportunity of seeking forbidden pleasures, and strengthen our trust in thee. Teach us so to regulate our hearts, that we may bend with humble resignation beneath thy chastening rod, and glow with holy confidence in thy mercy, sincerely grateful for all the benefits received at thy hands.

To submit with perfect resignation to the will of God, shall be henceforth our study. Our thoughts cannot be like his; but, confessing all our weaknesses, we will humble ourselves before the Eternal, and earnestly pray that we may not be utterly lost. Oh! suffer us not to perish; but stimulated by the heart-cheering prospect of everlasting life, body and soul let us devote to heaven, and patiently endure whatever evils may fall upon us here, being more than consoled by the blessed eternity which is to follow. Nothing on earth can be comparable to that glory which we shall know in a future state. Oh! may every obstacle to our onward progress be removed! The sacrifice of a true, faithful, and contrite heart, we desire to offer at the altar of that God who has given us the being we pos-Smile on our efforts, O Lord, to approach thy throne! Let not our hope in thee fail; but let it be our joyful task to proclaim thy marvellous deeds through all eternity!

### VANITY OF THE GREATEST WORLDLY TRIUMPHS.

These attainments are indubitably derived from God, and we must own that they are admirable: but, to confound human vanity, which becomes inflated by such gifts, the Almighty thinks proper to bestow them on his enemies. The many sages, conquerors, wise legislators, and excellent citizens of paganism, a Socrates, a Marcus Aurelius, a Scipio, a Cassar, and an Alexander, who were all deprived of the true knowledge of God, are considered by St. Augustin as being excluded from his eternal kingdom. It will be asked, did not God then create them? Who but he, who made all in heaven and earth? Why then did he give them being? What were the peculiar designs of that profound wisdom, which never does any thing in vain? Hear the answer of St. Augustin: "he made them," said he, "to give lustre to the ages in which they lived." He instilled these exalted qualities into great men for the same reason that he formed

the sun. Who does not admire that beautiful luminary? But, since God suffers it to shine equally on the good and the wicked, this lovely object was not created to make us happy, but to embellish and illuminate the great theatre of the world, Thus, when he gifts his enemies with that genius, intelligence, and virtue, which emanate from the Divinity, these rare endowments are not bestowed as blessings; they are meant to adorn the world, and serve as an ornament to the present age. How wretched is the destiny of those whom he raised to this high eminence of worldly glory! Are not their wishes centred in the praise of man? Haply you think that God will disappoint their vain ambition? No, he inflicts more severe punishment, by even exceeding their expectations. Alexander, who only thirsted for worldly renown, was exalted beyond his hopes. His name lives in every modern panegyric, and, by a fatality glorious to that conqueror, he participates in the glory of every hero. The heroic deeds of the Romans have likewise received a recompense adequate to their merits, and to their desires: the Almighty bestowed the empire of the world as a worthless gift. Oh, ye potentates, humble yourselves amid your pomp! Boast not, ye conquerors, of your victories! Human glory is a gift as fragile as it is vain, it reaches not the living! It is attached—to what? Perhaps to the medals or statues of these heroes and sages of antiquity, which are unearthed, with other relics of barbarism, or to the ruins of their monuments, or the fragments of their works, which are enveloped in obscurity and doubt. Such is the worthy recompense of their labours! and the gratification of their wishes proves the scourge of their errors,

De Bossuet.

## EVENING.—APRIL 17

THE SAVIOUR TO THE SOUL.

Child of man, whose seed below, Must fulfil their race of woe; Heir of want, and doubt, and pain, Does thy fainting heart complain? Oh! in thought, one night recal, The night of grief in Herod's hall; There I bore the vengeance due. Freely bore it all for you.

Child of dust, corruption's son, By pride deceiv'd, by pride undone, Willing captive, yet be free, Take my yoke, and learn of me. I, of heaven and earth the Lord, God with God, the eternal Word, I forsook my Father's side, Toil'd and wept, and bled, and died.

Child of doubt, does fear surprise, Vexing thoughts within thee rise; Wond ring, murm ring, dost thou gaze On evil men and evil days? Oh! if darkness round thee lour, Darker far my dying hour, Which bade that fearful cry awake, My God, my God, dost thou forsake? Child of heav'n, by me restor'd, Love thy Saviour, serve thy Lord; Seal'd with that mysterious name, Bear thy cross, and scorn the shame, Then, like me, thy conflict o'er, Thou shalt rise to sleep no more: Partner of my purchas'd throne, One in joy, in glory one.

Bowdler.

# RICHES CARRY NOT THEIR POSSESSOR TOWARD HEAVEN. LUKE XVIII

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit acultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

### CONTENT, NOT WEALTH, ESSENTIAL TO HAPPINESS.

Weak, covetous man, is rarely satisfied with his lot. In this view of his nature, profane and sacred writers concur. "Be content with such things as ye have," we are told in scripture. Some perhaps are so, but comparatively the number is few, and especially of those who have most largely benefited from the dispensations of Providence. Sometimes we see poor children in rags, playing with sand, and perfectly happy; at others, we behold the labourer worn out by severe toil, appeasing his hunger with coarse bread, quenching his thirst at the spring, and realising all the comfort that to other palates a splendid banquet could afford. Sharp hunger seasons his humble fare, and he is satisfied.

How different is it with many whose circumstances are better. One wish gratified, generates a new want, and thus men go on step by step, still craving more, and never thinking they have enough; the ladder of gratified wishes only serving to elevate them, so that they gain a prospect of new desires—of the promised land which they are never to reach.

Generally it may be remarked, that he who complains of a small income, had he annual thousands, would still wish for more, for his wants would expand with his means, and what formerly sufficed to make him happy, would then be regarded with scorn. Let such a man become a millionaire, and happiness would be as remote from him as ever, for he would then be overwhelmed with cares; become sickly and morose, and find, to his sorrow, that to be rich, is not to

be happy.

What a glorious proof is thus afforded of the goodness and wisdom of God, by the evidence we daily gain that happiness is not the necessary consequence of wealth, but of virtue. It would be humiliating to the nature of man, if peace of mind could depend on the possession of a certain quantity of glittering metal, on the web of the silk worm, or on some gem of the mineral kingdom. If felicity could only be found in the vicinity of huge masses of gold, the great body of mankind must necessarily live in sorrow, and die without experiencing relief. But infinite wisdom has ordered it otherwise. Often, the humble domestic who stands behind a carriage, is happier by far than the titled high-born noble, who sits within it -and those frequently enjoy most peace of mind, to whom the vanities and luxuries of life are unknown. With small means, being free from debts, we can live in health and comfort. Spared the trouble of considering how we can best employ our surplus capital, we more carefully study our duty to God and to our fellow men.

The humble rustic does not attempt to copy the manners of the fashionable world. If he did, it would cause him much trouble, and bring on him an infinity of ridicule, while those who are regarded as the favourites of fortune, know no higher pleasure than occasionally to throw off the conventional chains imposed by the usages of fashionable society, to imitate the simple life of the countryman, and to exchange the marble hall, for the silent grove, for the soft turf, and the cottage retreat. Sighs are for the most part only given to the affluent, who are paid for breathing them; those who have few worldly goods, have

little to do with cares and sorrows.

Be then content, Oh foolish heart! with such things as thou hast, and humbly thank the Lord thy God, if thou hast food and sufficient clothing. Discontent finds its way into all ranks of life, but it is among the sons of wealth that he more generally takes up his permanent abode. In his coarse

garment, the ploughman glances surlily at the gaily attired company in the lordly balcony, but dreams not that among them there are some who look down upon him with envy. Yet so it is, and this envy is most painful to its possessor. He gazes with sadness on the ruddy cheek of the rustic; on the appetite with which the workman takes his humble meal; and sighs for the calm refreshing sleep which follows, and which is not to be enjoyed beneath the gilded dome.

Thus it is the all-wise distributes his varied gifts. Into the scale of the poor he throws health, simple habits and content, and they have not to disturb themselves about estates, pedigrees and etiquette; while the affluent have with their wealth, all these to disturb their repose, with un-

numbered anxieties beside,

Gracious Parent, grant that we may receive at thy hand what is sufficient to meet our wants, with joy and gratitude. Doom us not to extreme poverty, nor try us with a superabundance of wealth. It is better to be content than to be rich. We are satisfied, and with thanks for thy bounty, we now betake ourselves to rest. Millions of our fellow creatures, who have no bed to lie upon, are perhaps still more grateful to their Creator than we are. Grant that we may become what we ought to be.

## MISERY OF THE SINNER AFTER DEATH.

If those only are blessed who die in the Lord; what must be their case, who die in their sins? Those are quite opposite characters, and must certainly have a different tendency and end. The one will find mighty supports in the last conflict: the other lose all dependance and hope. The one will terminate in blessedness: the other in misery. And who can sufficiently deplore the amazing ruin? A ruin that will necessarily spring out of their own vicious tempers from self reflection and self condemnation; which alone may be severe enough to make a hot and dreadful hell. When such recollect how they have acted contrary to the law of their nature; contrary to the dictates of religion, the checks of conscience, and the frequent restraints of shame and fear; when such remember the unfruitful works of darkness; the loss of all their pleasures, and stand dismayed at the dread, and darkness of futurity, how keen must every reflection be; and what the effect, out dissatisfaction, regret, self-upbraiding, and wild despair? But this is not all. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men. As a moral governor, God has given us laws to be obeyed; as a merciful Creator he has sent his son to declare and enforce them, by the most interesting motives; and is it not fit and reasonable that God should call men to an account, and, in consequence, deal with them according to their real moral character, otherwise government would be an insignificant thing. Now how dreadful is the portion allotted to such as die in their sins: namely, everlasting destruction from the anger of the Lord, and the glory of his power. Those who live under the gospel, without being the better for it; who persist in their wickedness;

notwithstanding its light and grace, and die as impenitent and incorrigible as they lived: all such are declared out of covenant, and out of Christ. They have nothing to expect, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries of God. That we might not think lightly of this ruin, it is expressed by things, which give the most exquisite pain as a gnawing worm, a burning and active fire: by things which strike the mind with the utmost horror, as darkness, plagues, blasphemy, and the second death, a death, which has all the pain, without the power of dying. Is it wise then to run such a desperate risk as this? Is it rational to corrupt and abuse a very short part of our duration, and thereby render all the rest miserable? Life is but a span that will soon be measured over; but immortality, eternity, how it extends beyond the reach of imagination! Will all the pleasures of sin countervail such a ruin? Will all the gaiety and mirth of a licentious life be an equivalent for the loss of heaven? I wish the intemperate and vicious part of mankind would think of these things.

Dr. Milner.

## MORNING.—APRIL 18.

GOD PITIES WHILE HE CHASTISES.

The Lord, how wondrous are his ways! How firm his truth! How large his grace! He takes his mercy for his throne, And thence he makes his glories known.

Not half so high his pow'r hath spread The starry heav'ns above our head, As his rich love exceeds our praise, Exceeds the highest hope we raise.

How slowly doth his wrath arise! On swifter wings salvation flies: And if he lets his anger burn, How soon his frowns to pity turn!

So fathers their young sons chastise, With gentle hands and melting eyes; The children weep beneath the smart, And move the pity of their heart.

Watts.

LOOK WITH CONFIDENCE TO GOD'S JUSTICE. LAMEN-TATIONS III.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.
47 Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction.

48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission.

50 Till the Lord look down, and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city.

52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause.

53 They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.

54 Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off.

55 ¶ I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon.

56 Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

57 Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

58 O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.

59 O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong, judge thou my cause.

60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginations against me;
61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O Lord, and all their

imaginations against me:
62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their

device against me all the day.

63 Behold their sitting down, and their rising up; I am their musick.

64 ¶ Render unto them a recompence, O Lord, according to the work of their hands.

THANK GOD FOR PRESENT BLESSINGS, AND TRUST
TO HIS MERCY FOR FUTURE SUPPORT.

Men suffer their lives to be consumed with earthly cares, which are of no avail. Anxiety for that which can at best have but a temporary value, is often permitted to withdraw their thoughts from the momentous cares of eternity. "Take no thought for to-morrow," was the sage counsel of the Redeemer; but alas! for us the blythe and joyous moments have gone by, when we could habitually and unconsciously act in conformity with it. O, years of innocence and content, how soon have ye passed away—never to return!

Most striking is the change we can perceive in ourselves. How quiet, how contented, how free from every gnawing care were our bosoms once! Now, from day to day, we are tormented with numerous anxieties, of which we had then no knowledge. Illness disturbs our comfort, and severe toil renders the passing hour irksome, and as the days in the opening season of the year are lengthened, so, as we advance, are our subjects for grief and apprehension multiplied. Fresh dangers we perceive are likely to shipwreck our happiness, and destroy our peace, and as the years most dreaded, those of advanced life, draw nearer and nearer, the courage and the hope which should prepare to meet them, grow fainter and fainter, till they seem on the point of being wholly exhausted.

Such is thy weakness, poor human nature! But can the immortal soul forget that it has been taught, it is only in heaven we can hope for hapniness. It is in this world that thou art to be tried and purified. With just regret we may lament that, such being the purpose of the present life, we have done little the recollection of which ought to disarm care, and encourage the hope that we have made ourselves acceptable to God.

It is only by acting a wiser—a better part, that the mind can be relieved from the weight which presses upon it. Time indeed, as he passes on, will remove some of the causes of our grief, and hope may spring where despondency was known, but the Lord who governs the seasons, as well as the fate of man, works changes in his good pleasure, and causes joy and grief alternately to succeed each other.

Were it possible, could we seriously wish that the days of our childhood should return? Could we covet again to go through the cares and misery we have known up to this period? Such a desire we cannot deliberately form. Let then the months and years pursue their accustomed course. The kindness of God lasts for ever; and if we are attentive to his doings, He is incessantly moved to

favour us.

It is well for us to look at the kindness still evinced toward us by the Creator whom we have neglected. God offers us every day fresh opportunities for doing good, in order that we may lay up for ourselves the treasures of eternal life. He saves us from many temptations, and guards us from innumerable perils. Times and seasons change; everything around us varies its form, but the gracious benevolence of God knows no change, and the covenant of his love stands for ever, unshaken by all the storms that may rage in a distracted world.

Let not our souls continue too anxious for things of the day, for the Lord has not forsaken us, and will not forsake us. "Take then no thought for the future, but confide in him."

The fainting heart must not tremulously inquire—how will it be with me when I come to bend beneath the infirmities of age; when I endure the anguish of the sick bed; when my eyes become dim, and general debility takes away my strength, and renders me a burthen to others? Fear not. He who has protected thee from thy youth upwards, will not abandon thee in the dreary season of old age. He knows what thy sufferings are; he has measured thy powers, and his goodness will not inflict more than thou canst bear. That God, who has given thee all in Christ Jesus, will

not deny the slighter boon, of relief from extremity of sorrow. Has the morning of thy life been clouded? Complain not; perhaps it was that thy noon might be more bright. Has thy noon been overcast? It may be that this was ordered, that the evening should bring thee sweeter repose. When most depressed, it is likely that unexpected relief has been prepared for thee, by first rendering thee more patient than heretofore; more calm, humble, and devout.

Even should this hope be disappointed, still weak heart, do not despond. Though all should remain sad and dreary till death approaches, look forward with hope and pious confidence to the dawn of that morning, when the Christian's neverending course of enjoyment will begin; to that land where no change can be feared, and where

suffering is unknown.

Let the true worshippers of God be of good courage, content to wait the coming of their Lord. In that day the apprehensions of the righteous will be changed into a certainty of bliss, while the hope of the Godless is lost for ever. Let then thy hope, thy trust, and thy love, be constantly increasing as the blessings of our Creator are about to increase. Disregard not his bounty; abuse not his forbearance. Even this day, by countless blessings, the Lord invites us to fly to him, and to repose upon him all our cares. Let us then offer to him the humblest thanksgivings which gratitude can tender for goodness so great. To thank the gracious donor of all good, is to praise his holiness and love, and gratefully to acknowledge blessings already received, is the way to gain more from our God and Father

#### MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE, AND ULTIMATE DESTINY.

Man's original condition was undountedly that of high intelligence. God created man in knowledge as well as in righteousness and true holiness. Had not man's knowledge been of a superior kind, he could not so promptly have given suitable names to the various beasts of the field. Man's original condition is represented by all divines, and that justly, as one of superior intelligence, as well as of virtue. Stilling-fleet says, "that our most successful endeavours after knowledge now are only the gathering up of some precious jewels which were lost out of sight, and sunk in the shipwreck of human nature." The same opinion prevailed in the pagan world, and a tradition is said to have been heard in Egypt by Plato, that "the first man was the greatest philosopher."

"With him his noblest sons might not compare. In god-like feature and majestic air; And as in form excelling, so in *mind*. The sire of men transcended all mankind" Now the celestial is represented in scripture as far superior to the paradisaical state, and knowledge is of course included as one element of superiority. It is also evident on other grounds than direct scriptural authority. The intellectual attainments of man in former, short-lived, inexperienced innocence cannot be expected to vie with those of the matured and perfected immortal spirit in heaven, for the latter has superior powers, implements, and instructors to accelerate his progress—the researches, the stores, and the instructions of cherubim to which to resort—the vast strata of knowledge, heaped together in the mighty collections of many worlds and many ages, and the enlightening splendour of heavenly day in

which to ramble and meditate.

Death is, therefore, to the believer, even in an intellectual and scientific point of view, a most desirable and delightful change. To him it is what the angel was to Peter; it emancipates him from the chains of error and the dark prison-house of sin; or what the approach of Stephen was to Paul, it breaks the film of ignorance; or what the first movement of the Spirit and the early beams of the solar orb were to a dark, unshapen world—a new scene of light and glory. We cannot probably better contrast heaven and earth, with respect to knowledge, than by vividly recalling to the imagination the great contrast we anticipate, as time closes and eternity commences; when, as it is generally supposed, amid the darkness, stillness, and inanity of a world whose senses and minds shall be steeped in the oblivion of deep sleep, the trump of the archangel shall peal, the glorious forms of lofty intelligences be displayed, lightnings gleam, the wide world will be wrapt in one sheet of flame, the heavens appear passing away with a great noise, and the awful splendour of divinity be manifested. What a contrast will then be witnessed in the natural world and the physical state of things, from the darkness of midnight to the brilliant light of a burning world; but death will without doubt reveal to the distinguished christian, intellectual light equally refulgent, scenes equally novel, and truths equally

Dr. Edwards.

## EVENING.—APRIL 18.

THE LORD IS OUR FATHER AND OUR FRIEND.

Thou, Lord, my safety, thou my light, What danger shall my soul affright? Strength of my life! what arm shall dare To hurt whom thou hast own'd thy care?

One wish, with holy transport warm, My heart has form'd, and yet shall form; One gift I ask, that to my end Fair Zion's dome I may attend:

There joyful find a sure abode, And view the beauty of my God; For he within his hallow'd shrine My secret refuge shall assign.

When thou, with condescending grace, Hast bid me seek thy shining face, My heart replied to thy kind word, Thee will I seek, all-gracious Lord! Should every earthly friend depart, And nature leave a parent's heart; My God, on whom my hopes depend, Will be my Father and my Friend.

Rippon's Collection.

GOD, WHO MADE, WILL DIRECT, HIS HUMBLE WORSHIPPER.
ISAIAH XLV.

5 ¶ I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no god beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the

Lord, and there is none else.
7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace.

and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with his maker! let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or

thy work, He hath no hands?

10 We unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?

11 Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their

host have I commanded.

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts.

GOD'S GLORY IN THE HEAVENS MAN'S TEACHER
ON EARTH.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work." This is so obviously true, that it cannot be questioned by any thinking man. When we raise our eyes to the stars above, in the hour of calm meditation, can we withhold our admiration from the vast and magnificent spectacle which meets our view? With the naked eye we can distinctly note some thousands of stars; but provided with a telescope, countless multitudes are perceived, numerous as the flakes of snow in a storm. We see them, and, with awe and wonder, bend before that Almighty Being who formed these myriads of wonders, and who knows them all-we mark the prodigies he has accomplished; we mark them and adore.

Irregular as these glittering orbs may appear, giving us the idea of their being thrown promiscuously where they are found without arrangement, there is no confusion, but, on the contrary,

the strictest order has been observed in placing them all. Every single planet has its own appointed orbit. Could it leave the track assigned to it, the system would be disturbed, the most awful consequences would ensue, and possibly the whole creation be destroyed. The distance of each from the other has been wisely and exactly calculated, so that all may receive their light and heat from the sun, round which they are ordered to revolve.

Of our earth it may be remarked, that were it nearer to, or further removed from, the sun, the effect on our light and heat thus produced, would be most prejudicial to the health and comfort of its inhabitants. Were the moon at a much greater distance, the light she gives forth, would to us be nearly imperceptible; it would be valueless, and her influence on the tides would be inconsiderable, Neither would the winds and the rains be such as are now experienced in this planet, and a vast increase of disease, suffering, and death, must

be the consequence.

Looking up to the starry heavens, the effect of solemn meditation is to make the humble man feel himself great, from the magnificence of his Creator, and the proud one humble, from the consciousness it must wake of his own comparative insignificance. Well would it be, if the rulers of the earth, before they ascend their thrones, were made to enter on the study of astronomy, that they might become better acquainted with the kingdom of God. This would serve to steel their hearts against pride, and they could never forget that there is one far, far above them,

a King of kings and Lord of lords.

Great Architect of the universe! how vast and how sublime are all the works of thy creation! Thy zodiacal light illuminates the polar regions, where, through half each year, the eternal crust of snow in which they are embedded, never feels the vivifying rays of the sun; thy aurora prepares the eye for bearing the more glaring light of day, and thy evening twilight moderates, by gentle gradations, the transition from light to darkness, which too abruptly brought to us, might injure our visual organs-might dazzle or bewilder us. Would that we felt within ourselves, mentally, like changes, to save us from dangerous delusions! Would that our minds were so disciplined by zeal for the honour of our Creator, that, at every setting sun, we might recal the solemn thought, and recal it with satisfaction, that possibly we gaze upon him for the last time! Would that our minds were so wakeful, that every star might admonish and preach to our souls a salutary lesson on the fleeting character of our present life, by reminding us that before his light gives way to the brighter light of the sun, the light of our eyes may be extinguished for ever by the cold hand of death.

This, at all events we know with certainty, that one night must come, which will be the last we may behold on earth; but who among the sons of men can tell us when it will be? That momentous information cannot be supplied. Let then, every evening we may be permitted to look upon, guide our thoughts to the grave, and let us never compose ourselves to rest for the night, without making it image to our minds the sleep of death.

Happy would it be for us, if at this moment we could think of death, and of the account to be rendered hereafter, at the bar of God, without cause for apprehension. Alas! conscience sternly tells us that many witnesses may rise against us, sinners as we are, to prove that we are little worthy of the mercy of our gracious, but often-forgotten With sorrow and confusion we recal our wanderings. We have offended our brethren, we have neglected those who suffered from poverty or sickness, and have not been duly anxious to occupy our time in doing good. In all things we have weakly, but daringly, sinned against thee, Lord of the sun, and all the worlds which we gaze upon! it is thine, Oh merciful Father! thine only, to acquit us of the many dread offences of which we stand self-convicted. For the sake of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, let thy pardon not be withheld from the humbled sinner, from the transgressor who is sincerely penitent

## CONTEMPLATE THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE CREATOR IN HIS WORKS.

On a careless inspection, you perceive no accuracy or uniformity in the position of the heavenly bodies. They appear like an illustrious chaos, a promiscuous heap of shining globes; neither ranked in order, nor moving by line. But what seems confusion, is all regularity. What carries a show of negligence, is really the result of the most masterly contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aerial flight, but they rove by the nicest rule, and without the least error. Their circuits, though seemingly devious; their mazes, though intricate to our apprehensions; are marked out, not indeed with golden compasses, but by the infinitely more exact determinations of the all-wise Spirit.

So, what wears the appearance of calamity, in the allotments appointed for the godly, has really the nature of a blessing. It issues from fatherly love, and will terminate in the richest good. If Joseph is snatched from the embraces of an indulgent parent, and abandoned to slavery in a foreign land, it is in order to save the holy family from perishing by famine, and to preserve "the seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed." If he falls into the deepest disgrace, it is on purpose that he may rise to the highest honours.—Even the confinement of the prison, by the unsearchable workings of providence, opens his way to the right-hand of the throne itself.—Let the most afflicted servant of Jesus wait the final upshot of things; he will then discover the apparent expediency of all those tribulations which now, perhaps, he can hardly admit, without reluctance; or suffer, without some struggles of dissatisfaction. Then, the gushing tear, and the heaving sigh, will be turned into tides of gratitude, and hymns of holy wonder.

In the mean time, let no audacious railer presumptuously impeach the divine procedure; but, adoring where we cannot comprehend, let us expect the evolution of the mysterious plan. Then shall every eye perceive, that the seeming labyrinths of providence were the most direct and compendious way to effect his general purposes of grace, and to bring about one's particular happiness .- Then also shall it be clearly shown, in the presence of applauding worlds, why virtue pined in want, while vice rioted in affluence; why amiable innocence so often dragged the dungeon chain, while horrid guilt trailed the robe of state. - That day of universal audit, that day of everlasting retribution, will not only vindicate, but magnify, the whole management of heaven. The august sessions shall close with this unanimous, this glorious acknowledgment. "Though clouds and darkness, impenetrable by any human scrutiny, were sometimes round about the supreme Conductor of things; yet righteousness and judgment were the constant habitation of his seat; the invariable standard of all his administrations."-Thus (if I may illustrate the grandest truths by inferior occurrences,) while we view the arras, on the side of least distinction, it is void of any elegant fancy; without any nice strokes of art; nothing but a confused jumble of incoherent threads. No sooner is the piece beheld in its proper aspect, but the suspected rudeness vanishes, and the most curious arrangement takes place. We are charmed with designs of the finest taste, and figures of the most graceful form. All is shaped with symmetry; all is clad in beauty. Hervey.

## MORNING.—APRIL 19.

SUBMISSION IS WISDOM IN THE CHRISTIAN.

O Lord, my best desire fulfil, And help me to resign Life, health, and comfort to thy will, And make thy pleasure mine.

Why should I shrink at thy command, Whose love forbids my fears? Or tremble at the gracious hand That wipes away my tears?

No, let me rather freely yield What most I prize to thee; Who never hast a good withheld, Or wilt withhold from me Thy favour, all my journey through, Thou art engag'd to grant; What else I want, or think I do, 'Tis better still to want,

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection

GOD TRIES THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT WILL DESTROY THE WICKED. PSALM XI.

- 1 In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?
- 2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.
- 3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?
- 4 The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of
- 5 The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.
- 6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.
- 7 For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

THE SORROW OF THIS WORLD DESIGNED TO TRY
THE CONSTANCY OF GOD'S CHILDREN.

We are told, in that book which Christians profess to make the guide of their life, that "They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with affections and lusts." Since such is the case, have not each of us reason to fear that we are still far from that point which we ought to have reached? Of our affections and lusts, how little notice do we take, with a view to their salutary chastisement! We are often indifferent about the evil thoughts which find a place in our minds, and reflect not how desirable it is that the heart should become firm in all that it is to will and perform; firm in its convictions and hopes, and firm in its courage and confidence in God. It is only then that it can make a vigorous and effectual resistance against the seductive temptations of life.

We must crucify our flesh, with all its affections and lusts, that we may know how to govern our affections and emotions, so that we may truly live in Christ, and secure to ourselves lasting peace of mind. Left to ourselves, the violence of raging passion will often choke our better feelings, darken the light that is within us, and render it difficult, nay, impossible, to shape our course with due reflection and fortitude, to prefer what is good, to what will eventually prove

evil, and to be resigned, as becomes us, to whatever the great Disposer of events may ordain.

By studying to conquer and govern ourselves, we shall learn from the Saviour to be forbearing

and patient.

We must endeavour to be consistent, nor suffer the symmetry exhibited in one portion of our conduct to be marred by the hideous deformity of vice being seen in another. If we cannot make ourselves in all things as perfect as we ought to be, let our reason and our resolution be taxed to avoid startling contrasts. Let us consider the object of our being. It is to render ourselves acceptable in the sight of God. This we cannot effect by means of observing any rules laid down for us-though these may tend to our advantage—without a living, fervent desire to be good. The young man in the gospel had kept all the commandments; but for all that, he could not make up his mind to follow the Saviour, and abandon his worldly treasures. Many of our contemporaries, in the same spirit, are constant in their attendance at a place of worship; have prayers at stated intervals at home, and often read the scriptures; yet still, cold and indifferent, they feel not the force of the precepts they hear and read: their hearts are not really attuned to virtue, and they remain far from God.

Those who feel as Christians ought to feel, are prepared to bear those calamities with which it may be the will of the Supreme Being to try their constancy, with sorrow, but with calm resignation. Strong in faith, they are inwardly persuaded that, though circumstances may severely test their faith, the Universal Father will not suffer the infliction to be greater than they, by summoning up moderate resolution, can bear.

The feeling that evil days, as well as happy ones, are sent to us by God for some wise purpose, will in no slight degree abate the sorrow which, otherwise, the former would cause us to experience. We know it will ultimately lead to good, and the impression with which God strengthens his children, will protect us against violent emotions, that, in their headlong course, would carry us to sin and perdition, by rendering us watchful, moving us to pray, and refreshing us with comforting promises, and above all, by fixing our thoughts on the example of Christ.

Oh! that we may constantly possess that presence of mind which will enable us to make a proper use of these invaluable weapons. If we do this, we shall not want power to crucify our

flesh, with its sinful affections and degrading lusts. Gracious God! we implore thee to grant us thy sword and thy shield. Case us in thy armour. Neither in this day, nor in those which vet remain to thy worshippers, suffer them to be divested of this defence, which will render them strong against the world and all its evil ways. We will not slumber on the post assigned. Constantly watchful, to thee our prayers shall evermore ascend; and by daily reference to thy holy word, and by seeking thy communion, we trust that our love for thee will constantly increase, and our hearts, at length, be presented before thee, uncontaminated by sinful desires, till the advent of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, among whose followers we desire to be found, and remain world without end.

#### VIRTUE'S ULTIMATE TRIUMPH.

It has been asserted that knowledge distinguishes man from the brute; we, however, would rather say that it was virtue, for this necessarily includes knowledge, and renders knowledge more accessible, more useful, and more delightful.

Virtue comes from God, it assimilates to God, and conducts to God. It is the glory of angels; it is the image of the Great Eternal. To communicate it to man Christ died and rose again, and the Spirit of Grace descended from heaven. From its first appearance in the parents of mankind after their apostacy, seraphs have watched its progress with earnest hope and unmingled complacency. At the news of its commencement in a single wandering prodigal, heaven renews its joy, and resounds with gratulation. Eternal wisdom beholds it as an undefiled emanation from itself, and smiles with boundless delight over its infantile existence, and its everlasting advancement towards perfection. In the present fallen world it is like the fair and fragrant rose amid noxious and odious weeds and thorns; or like the lowly and lovely violet which is ever discoverable by its reviving fragrance, rather than by its gaudy display; and in the heavenly world it shall shine as the sun for ever.

Virtue alone shall smile and triumph when this world is wrapt in flames. When the throne of judgment is erected, and all the generations of men are assembled, virtue shall alone stand the searching scrutiny and obtain the soothing approbation of the great Judge of quick and dead. Virtue shall then be the object of universal attention and desire, and shall inhale the delights of true admiration and applause from all intelligent beings, however despised and neglected now; for it shall then be discovered, that to the remotest ages of eternity, the highest honours, the richest premiums, the most exalted stations, the most agreeable circumstances, and the mightiest intellect, shall be awarded to the men who have attained the highest standards of sanctity.

The complaint suggested by the poet of Salamis, which was querulously urged by Brutus ere he committed the fatal act of desperation, and which has been, in different modifications, repeated in every age and murmured by every heart: "O unhappy virtue! I have worshipped thee as a real good, but thou art a vain empty name, and the slave of fortume"—will then prove perfectly unfounded and unreasonable; for at that

great day this shall be found to constitute the only true sterling gold, in comparison with which everything else that the world has produced is but as base metal, destined to be consumed.

Dr. Edwards.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 19.

THE LORD'S PROTECTION IMPLORED FOR ALL.

In thee, thou all-sufficient God, The springs of happiness arise, That cheer this howling waste below, And bless the mansions of the skies.

We, the productions of thy power, And pensioners upon thy love, Look to thy throne with longing eyes And wait thy blessings from above.

Protect the young from every snare And let thy staff support the old; Relieve the poor, nor let the rich Have all their heritage in gold.

Let joyful saints still taste thy grace, Give to the mourners heavenly day, Sustain the strong, and quick revive The withering plants from their decay.

Rippon's Collection.

#### GOD WILL BE OUR DELIVERER. PSALM XVIII.

1 I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

2 The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

3 I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so

shall I be saved from mine enemies.

4 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of

ungodly men made me afraid.

5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of

death prevented me.
6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my

God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wrath.

8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.

10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

fly upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

12 At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail-stones and coals of fire.

13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire.

14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and

he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foun-

dations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.

## PASSING CALAMITIES SENT BY GOD, AS THE HERALDS OF COMING GOOD.

"The plowers plowed upon my back," says the Psalmist. He had known suffering from his youth, but still he trusted in God, and trusted not in vain. From time to time, the Lord causes his justice to be severely felt both by individuals and nations. This befals many who may be deemed to rank among those whom he has chosen: and who are of the number of his children. They have often to endure a plowing on their back, but such plowing has only for its object to render the field of the sufferer's mind fertile and good. In eventful times, how much has been done for nations by plowings, which have for a season proved to be most trying visitations. Great improvements in the social system, in the constitutions, and the laws of various states, have in this way been effected. In the cases of individuals, thousands who were running to destruction, have been saved —reclaimed from degrading indolence, to honourable activity—being timely moved by what may be called "a plowing on the back." In this way, not a few who were slaves to luxury have been led back to sobriety; ingrates brought by pain to their senses, have ceased to be thankless, while those who were forgetful of God, have happily been awakened to a sense of religion; and that change in them has become the happy source from which many acts of mercy-many deeds of true benevolence and brotherly love, have flowed.

Much that it has been the will of God to effect, has been accomplished by such means. It was through the effects of these that the haughty have been humbled, that injurious prejudices have been dispelled, and the realmof science largely extended. It is to these we are indebted for those beneficial changes which have brought the different ranks of society more closely together, than they were formerly; that the labours of merit and genius are better appreciated, and better rewarded—and that the pride of rank and birth, the cause in other days of mournful suffering, and cruel injustice, has been abated. These improvements ought to

be gratefully appreciated. The concession experienced in our time, and the fearful resolutions in various kingdoms, have caused us some trials and melancholy experience. These were much deplored, but we have since learned to take a more calm and unprejudiced view of them, in all their bearings, and doing so, we perceive the hand of Providence, which governs all things, carefully using them, so that good may come out of evil. The human race is to be purified by the fire of tribulation: the dormant faculties of thousands are to be awakened and strengthened, and the indolent roused to energetic exertion. This must be done, that those who have forgotten their Creator, may be led back to ways of holiness. Then shall the nations of the earth be more closely linked together by the bonds of brotherhood and humanity, while, by their co-operation, the blessings of the arts and sciences will be communicated to uncivilized nations, that the darkness of barbarity and ignorance may more and more disappear from the face of the earth, and the light of wisdom and intellect be every where diffused.

Knowing such to be the behest, we can look even to times of trouble, without fear for the result. Trusting in the goodness of the Ruler of the universe, we will not for a moment lay aside our confidence in him. He knows what is best to be done, and will adopt measures best suited to the object he has in view, however strange they may appear to our dim vision. The fruits of his labours will fully justify all that he has ordered, and be all that we could rationally desire.

But for this we must wait with patience. Evil advances with a rapid step; it is in the very nature of things that the good following it should be slow in making its appearance, especially when so many obstacles are opposed to its growth by the folly and depravity of man. The triumph however will eventually be witnessed. While it is on its way, be it our endeavour to avail ourselves of the benefits of all the salutary influence which disappointment or tribulation can afford. To exercise patience, to learn to endure pain and sorrow with calmness and pious resolution, shall be our anxious care. May the hand of God laid upon us in chastening love, cause our hearts to bring forth fruits of righteousness-and when we have weathered the storm of life, when our souls have reached the shore beyond the grave, then shall we look back exultingly on the course we have pursued, while contemplating the happiness prepared for us by temporary woe.

#### THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF DIVINE LOVE.

The Christian's life is hidden in the all-sufficiency of the divine nature. And there are immense stores of life, of every kind, hidden in God, in this sense. This whole world of beings, that have, and have not souls, with all the infinite varieties of the life of plants, animals, and angels, were hidden in this fruitful and inexhaustible fund of the divine all-sufficiency, before God began to create a world. All things were then hidden in God; for of him are all things, and from him all things proceeded. Now this all-sufficiency of God consists in those powers and perfections, whereby he is able to do all things for his creatures; and ready to do all for his saints; these are most eminently his wisdom, his almightiness, and his goodness.

There are inconceivable riches of goodness and grace in God, which are employed in furnishing out life for all his saints; and all the unknown preparations of future glory are the effects of his grace. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ;" and he did it for this purpose, "that in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." Not all the goodness that appears in the rich provision he hath made for all the natural world of creatures, nor all the overflowing bounties of his providence, since the first creation, are equal to those unsearchable treasures of mercy and goodness, which he hath employed for the spiritual welfare, and eternal life and happiness of his own chosen children; and in the secret of this grace were all the blessings of his covenant hidden from eternity.

The divine wisdom is another part of his all-sufficiency. There are in God infinite varieties of thought and counsel, riches of knowledge, and wisdom unsearchable; and he hath made these abound in his new creation, as well as in the old; in the supernatural, as well as in the natural world. "He hath abounded towards us," sinners, in this work of salva-tion, "in all wisdom and prudence." What surprising wisdom appears in the vital powers of an animal, even in the life of brutes that perish! What glorious contrivance, and divine skill, to animate clay, and make a fly, a dog, or a lion of it! What sublime advances of wisdom to create a living man, and join these two distinct extremes, flesh and spirit, in such a vital union, that has puzzled the philosophers of all ages, and constrained some of them to confess and adore a God! And what a superior work of Divinity, is it, to turn a dead sinner into a living saint, here on earth! and then to adorn a heaven, with all its proper furniture, for the eternal life and habitation of his sons and daughters! What divine skill is required here! What immense profusion of wisdom, to form bodies of immortality and glory, for every saint, out of the dust of the grave, and the ashes of martyred Christians! Our spiritual and our eternal life are hid in the wisdom or

The power of God is his all-sufficience too. The power that quickens and raises a soul to this divine life, must be almighty.

\*Dr. Watts.\*

## MORNING .-- APRIL 20.

COMMIT ALL TO GOD.

Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into his hands,
To his sure truth and tender care,
Who earth and heaven commands;

Who points the clouds their course Whom winds and seas obey, He shall direct thy wandering feet, He shall prepare thy way.

Put thou thy trust in God, In duty's path go on: Fix on his word thy stedfast eye. So shall thy work be done:

No profit canst thou gain By self-consuming care: To him commend thy cause, his ear Attends the softest prayer.

Give to the winds thy fears, Hope, and be undismayed; God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears; God shall lift up thy head.

Through waves, and clouds, and storms, He gently clears thy way: Wait thou his time-thy darkest night Shall end in brightest day.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

GOD'S MIGHTINESS AND MERCY. JOB XXXVI.

4 For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. 5 Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is

mighty in strength and wisdom. 6 He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth

right to the poor. 7 He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish

them for ever, and they are exalted, 8 And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of

affliction:

9 Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

10 He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

11 If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days

in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. 12 But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword,

and they shall die without knowledge. 13 But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry

not when he bindeth them.

14 They die in youth, and their life is among the un-

## PRUDENCE REQUIRES THAT WE FORTIFY OUR HEARTS AGAINST WORLDLY SORROWS.

How can man be vain of this perishing frame, reading its origin and knowing its destiny. are of the dust, and shall turn to dust again," we are told in scripture, and the solemn truth ought ever to be present to the mind of man. This we have been taught and known from our youth upwards. We have seen how frail, how perishing is human nature; and yet, with a degree of

weakness which it is equally difficult to excuse or to explain, to men we have looked for succour and encouragement, have shaped our conduct and formed our minds with a view to win their applause, instead of remembering and employing our moments, so as to gain the approving smile of the mighty author of our existence. folly thus to magnify the importance of those who, like ourselves, formed of dust, must inevitably to dust return! To look to creatures so powerless, so little to be depended upon for that support of which, in the day of affliction, we may stand in need. We may indeed, when it is offered, receive the proffered assistance of our fellow men with good will and holy gratitude; but when most kind—when their efforts are most important, we ought only to recognise them as the instruments of the Almighty's bounty—the medium through which it is his pleasure that the benefits designed for our solace should be conveyed.

Far be it from us to receive the friendly attentions of our bretheren with coldness, or to undervalue their kindness, whatever the form it may assume, but kindly acknowledging all indications of their good-will, it is for the Christian to look higher, and to bear in mind, that of themselves, men can do nothing. All that is good comes from God. Unless his blessing follow their labours, whatever they attempt must fail. They cannot minister to the grief within—they cannot reach the distress of the heart. It is in God then that we should put our trust. If we do not confidently rely upon his mercy to his children, we have no

real foundation for hope.

On him-on him then, let our thoughts be fixed. That same wise and comprehensive Providence, which regulates the destiny of the universe, governs also our fate; and whatever enemies may rise against us, we cannot fail. We cannot fall the victims of suffering and oppression, unless this has been ordained by God, and by him it cannot be ordered but for some wise purpose, which, however, imperfectly understood at the present moment, will be gloriously manifest in

Unhappily we have but too much reason to know, that in our case, suffering cannot be spared by justice. We have sinned, have weakly and ungratefully sinned against a kind father. We have offended by not trusting to his love—by not looking up to his goodness and wisdom for support in the time of trouble. Had we been rational, had we recollected what we read in scripture, that not a hair can fall from our heads without divine permission, how greatly, at various periods of our lives, could that blessed thought have diminished the sum of our griefs. How much better should we have been able to bear up under the pressure of severe disappointment, if, instead of depending upon ourselves, or looking to men for the aid we required, our thoughts had, with pious assurance, sought at once the fountain of all good, and ascended to our God who reigns above the sky, who is able, at all seasons, most abundantly to supply the wants of his creatures, and who will never fail those who humbly strive to render themselves acceptable in his sight, and call upon him for needful succour.

O, may the follies we now with grief and humiliation recal, and the bitter experience we have had, produce their proper fruit, wiser resolutions and less blameable conduct! Better understanding our own weakness, and the nothingness of all creatures of dust, we will learn to look higher, and fix for the time to come our hopes on God

alone.

Be it ours gratefully to muse on his wise dispensations, and to strive, from day to day, to feel more assured of his marvellous goodness, as well as of his boundless might, that we may thence draw the heart-gladdening inference, that whatever

he does must be good.

It shall also be our care to keep in mind, that wise as he is, it is impossible that he should grant all our weak and wayward hearts may from time to time desire. We are not for a moment to suppose that it is for us to direct him. He sees what our wants really are, and will bestow what is most conducive to our eternal happiness. Our skill, our prudence, our best exertions cannot give us that blessed peace—that holy enjoyment which may be derived from a devout frame of mind. Of this let us render ourselves worthy, by humbling ourselves before the Creator of man, and by disposing ourselves to recognise his mercies in all the works of his hand. To obtain comfort here and bliss hereafter, let it be our study, so far as may be, to avoid disturbing ourselves with worldly cares. Are our hopes not gratified? our wishes breathed in vain? Still, our confidence in the Supreme Being must know no abatement. Let our thoughts be, "God is good, and all is for the best." Severe visitations may come upon us. These we may deplore, but we will remember that what we endure on earth, in this early stage of a never-ending career, is of little importance to an

immortal spirit. Its object undoubtedly is to prepare us, while here, for that life on which we are to enter in the world to come. Our minds must be gradually enlarged, and proved to fit us for a more perfect state of being. This thought is comfort; and, O! gracious God, for the merits of thy son, our Redeemer, vouchsafe thy timely support, that we may not fail in the hour of trial.

#### THE COVENANT BETWEEN COD AND CHRIST

Christ's coming into the world to save sinners, was the result of the divine faithfulness, inasmuch as this was done pursuant to an eternal covenant, that passed between the Father and the Son, relating to this matter. There is nothing done in the whole method of providence and grace, but what was pre-concerted, and accordingly was the result of God's eternal purpose: and as the Father and the Son had each of them a distinct concern in the work of our redemption, they had each a distinct consideration in the eternal plan that was laid in order to its being brought about. Thus our Saviour was, as the apostle expresses it, fore-ordained before the foundation of the world; called to engage in the office of a mediator; the whole work of the redemption of the elect committed to his management; promises given him for his encouragement herein, of which some related to his having an human nature, curiously framed and prepared by the Father, and furnished by the Holy Ghost, with all those gifts and graces that were necessary to his engaging in this work; and there were other promises relating to his being carried successfully through it, viz., that after the suffering of death he should be crowned with glory and honour; and then, have the application of redemption committed to him, that so it might be truly said of him, that he performed the work, and has a right to bear the glory thereof.

On the other hand, our Saviour, being called to perform this work, gave his full consent thereunto, expressed in those words, "Lo, I come to thy will;" I am content that thou shouldst bore mine ear; I am willing to be thy servant, to perform this important work; "I delight to do thy will, O God." The work lay very near his heart, inasmuch as it would bring the highest revenue of glory to the divine name. And indeed, it was absolutely necessary, not only that he should be called to it, but that he should comply with this call. Had he not been called to it, God the Father could not have accepted of anything that might have been done by him, as a price of redemption, how valuable soever it might be in itself. And his compliance is equally necessary, inasmuch as he was to be substituted in the room of sinners, be charged with their guilt, and bear the punishment that was due to them, though he was in all other respects guiltless. Now justice cannot admit of any one's bearing that guilt which was contracted by others, and suffering the punishment that was due to them, without his own consent. This he freely gave, and promised to fulfil the work that was committed to him; therefore, as his being sent into the world to save sinners, was a display of the faithfulness of God the Father; his doing this with his own consent, pursuant to what he had stipulated in this eternal covenant, was an instance of the glory of his own faithfulness, which divine perfection belonging equally to him with the Father, was eminently glorified also in everything that he did and suffered in order to the salvation of his people.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 20.

## HEAVENLY REST.

There is an hour of peaceful rest.
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distress'd,
A balm for every wounded breast—
'Tis found above—in heaven.

There is a soft, a downy bed,
'Tis fair as breath of even;
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose, in heaven!

There is a home for weary souls,
By sin and sorrow driven;
When toss'd on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise, and ocean rolls,
And all is drear—but heaven!

There, faith lifts up her cheerful eye
To brighter prospects, given:
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven!

There, fragrant flowers, immortal, bloom, And joys supreme are given: There rays divine disperse the gloom:— Beyond the confines of the tomb, Appears the dawn of heaven!

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

THE BÖSOM CLEANSED BY CONFESSION OF SIN.
PSALM XXXII.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not

iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my

roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

## PREPARE TO MEET GOD.

All the human race must die, and all must stand before the Eternal Judge. "Who," the gospel solemnly asks, "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead?" The answer to this question we ourselves must supply. Sent, as we have been, by the King of kings, to promote his wise and beneficent designs among men, have we steadily persevered in the path marked out for us to tread? Have we constituted ourselves the willing instruments of the tender mercies of our God, and

pursued, with untiring eagerness, the objects which we felt ought to engage our attention? Our minds, in matters that relate to eternal things, ought to remain unchangeable as the stars which adorn the heavens, to which, like them, the former belong.

If duly sensible of our own condition, we must feel that the Lord has been pleased to endow us with reason, free will, and a capacity to meditate on sacred subjects. Created in his own image. and destined for immortality, he has graciously blessed us with the power of doing good, and armed us with strength to resist temptation. Yet still, the account which we must one day be called upon to render is often forgotten, or but languidly borne in mind. Then do we lose sight of the importance of securing the approving smile of that Marvellous and Mighty One, who first commanded that we should see the light; we become the servants of men, the slaves of passion and of earthly affections, and wholly indifferent about matters of religion. Then do we begin to depreciate the forms of public worship; we imagine inconsistencies and contradictions in all we hear from holy men; our faith becomes lukewarm, and our vows are forgotten. This has often happened in our case; and with sincere sorrow we have to deplore, that the account which must at the last day be rendered to the Judge of the quick and the dead, has been wholly forgotten. and we have found ourselves like those whom we had previously regarded with horror or commiseration, or at all events whose principles and course of life we had not been able to approve. Having thus forgotten ourselves, have we not ample reason to feel alarmed for our souls?

Thanks be to God! we need not despair, since happily we perceive the danger which threatens our eternal welfare, while yet time remains for manifesting our contrition, and for looking to our Saviour for mercy. Too long have we slept in false security, forgetful of the danger that awaited us. Mighty Searcher of hearts! thou knowest what our blindness has been; thou knowest what our feelings are. It is now, by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, that we become aware of what we have done, that we are now conscious of what we really are.

And still we feel a growing confidence that thou wilt remain with us, and guide us in all our ways. The good work which the self-knowledge now imparted has commenced, thou wilt not suffer to remain incomplete. Often hast thou heard

the confession of our mournful errors. To thee it has been addressed, unseen of man, in the hour of silence and solitude-of solemn thought, and anxious self-examination. Not unheard was our supplication,-so we have reason to hope; for still have thy feeble worshippers been cheered by thy forbearance, and sustained by thy indulgence. To the desire to do right, thy grace will add the power of acting up to our resolves; thy paternal love will still be extended to save us; for thou delightest not in the death of a sinner.

Thus seeking to commune with thee, we feel our hearts enlarged, and our strength increased. While imploring thy aid with zeal and sincerity, we already prove ourselves conquerors. reason then will forbid us henceforth to let one evening pass without raising our thoughts to the God of nature in earnest prayer. We will entreat him to impart new energy, new determination to apply our hearts to true wisdom, that the work of repentance begun in our bosoms may be brought to a happy completion. As we finish this day with the offering of our devout homage to the throne of mercy, we will constantly lift our thoughts to the Eternal who is in heaven. Grant, O Lord! that we may constantly strive against the enemies of our salvation, with neverfailing courage. Lend thy all-powerful aid, to conquer every evil propensity that we may prove; and, standing firm to truth and virtue, feel, as our last moment approaches, that we are not miserably sinking to the earth, but in the proper course of preparation for a glorious flight to heaven.

#### THE VAST IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY REPENTANCE.

Would the vicious be willing their bones, full of the sin of their youth, should lie down with them in the dust? Would they be pleased to have their sins follow them into the other world, to testify against them in the last day. If not, the only way to avoid this, is by a sincere repentance and amendment of their ways. If after all we pay little or no regard to God's command in this affair; yet the thing is reasonable in itself. Reasonable, that we should undo, what we have done amiss; reasonable, that we should review a wrong conduct with an ingenious remorse, and self-abhorrence; reasonable, to consider every vice as a deviation from truth, rectitude and happiness. And if repentance appears reasonable, it must be necessary before we leave our state of trial. And to defer this, from a delusive purpose of repenting before we die, is madly to choose both our sin and suffering ; to be pleased with sin now, and to be willing to afflict our souls for it hereafter. But in reason, and in the language of scripture, "now is the time, now the accepted time; and the day of salvation."

And lastly. The general exhortation from hence is to live well; because there is no dying well without it; no dying with comfort and safety. What God commands, and for

which he will reward, is no other than a direct pursuit of our own interest. The course of virtue, which he points out, is excellent and amiable. It amounts to this, the right use of our reason, and regulating every spring of action by its law and influence. Vice, on the contrary, is a deviation from reason, and acting by the motives of sense and passion without reason, or in opposition to it. The one is an excellence, the other a deformity: the one is truth and liberty, the other error and a base servitude; the one finally, tends to our perfection and happiness, the other to our debasement and ruin. In all this, nothing is required, but what becomes us, and nothing produced, but what improves us, viz., inward security and peace. 'Tis from the right use of our powers, and maintaining a due subordination between them, that result all those virtues, which are the honours of our nature and religion. For he that in those things, namely, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men. The whole frame of our Saviour's religion was designed to explain and enforce moral obligations. For this he lived and died, for this he offered his example, his love, his spirit, his ordinances, his sacrifices, his heaven: every encouragement, to induce us to become good and virtuous. He came to deliver us from sin and its penal consequences, to restore God's original kingdom amongst us, and purchase to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. In all this affair, he considers us as moral agents, capable of making a right, or a wrong use of our faculties; of our talents, helps and advantages: he uses no force, denies no gift, withholds no grace, that is necessary to our doing the will of God; so that if our destruction follows, it will appear to result from nothing, but our own negligence, obstinacy and wilful abuse of our powers and faculties, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; but men love darkness rather than light. Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life." We have then every consideration to engage us to live well; which if we make our earnest study, in all the views of life, we shall neither be ashamed to live, nor afraid to die.

Dr. Milner.

## MORNING.—APRIL 21.

#### BROTHERLY LOVE.

Kindred in Christ, for his dear sake, A hearty welcome here receive: May we together now partake The joys which only he can give.

To you and me by grace 'tis giv'n To know the Saviour's precious name, And shortly we shall meet in heav'n, Our hope, our way, our end the same.

May he, by whose kind care we meet, Send his good Spirit from above; Make our communication sweet, And cause our hearts to burn with love.

Forgotten be each worldly theme, When Christians meet together thus; We only wish to speak of him Who lived, and died, and reigns for us. We'll talk of all he did, and said, And suffer'd for us here below; The path he mark'd for us to tread, And what he's doing for us now.

Thus, as the moments pass away, We'll love, and wonder, and adore; And hasten on the glorious day, When we shall meet to part no more.

Newton.

## THE GLORY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. JOB XXIX.

2 Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me;

3 When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness:

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of 3od was upon my tabernacle;

5 When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me:

6 When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil;

7 When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street!

8 The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose, and stood up.

9 The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.

10 The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

11 When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me:

12 Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

13 The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me.

# IMPROVE THE PASSING MOMENT, BY PURIFYING OUR MINDS.

"Man fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not." That nothing here is permanent, each succeeding day and night tells to another, and each hour on which we are permitted to enter, may, for aught we know, prove our last. When this is suggested, how urgent is the exhortation which it conveys, that we should exert ourselves, without delay, to do what we can, and what we ought to do, lest the opportunity for exerting ourselves should be lost for ever. Moments suffered to pass without being improved, must be mourned as irrecoverably lost. The error we may lament, but in vain. No prayers, no tears can cause the time which has once fled to return.

The reflection is awful; but we must remember that the God who gave us being, will one day require us to give an account of the time which we

have lost. When that shall take place, what does our consciences tell must be the judgment pronounced? At this fearful thought, we rouse ourselves, and desire at once strenuously to labour, that we may faithfully accomplish our destined labour here, and be prepared for the final ordeal. Let us not shrink from toil, nor repine, if the burthen thrown upon us this day should be severely felt. Though the task may be great, we will not forget that those who assiduously strive to do good, will be assisted by the blessing of the Most High, and cheered by divine favour.

In pursuing those objects, for which it is our vocation to strive, let us endeavour to be temperate and circumspect. Indiscreet precipitation may defeat the purpose we have in view. Unless we regulate our actions by just discrimination, we beat the air, and task our powers in vain. In this way, we perceive too many of our fellow mortals lose their time. They find themselves overpowered by the difficulties which they have to encounter, from the injudicious manner in which they proceed, and regard with an evil eye the discretion and care, which, in the case of others, lead to an opposite result. Hence, their lives embittered by folly, are often rendered still worse by the throbs of envy, violence, and unchecked ambition.

Thus peace of mind, thus virtue, and thus life, are thrown away. How many have we seen passing from view like a shadow, because they could not command their feelings, and regulate their conduct, so as to improve their time, and value comfort, while patiently submitting to the trials of life. They have repined that their zeal has not been appreciated, and their fidelity rewarded. This is an evil, but it is one which a Christian will know how to bear. We must not fall into the error committed by men who appear inconsolable, because such are their disappointments.

In circumstances like those described, let us remember what was the condition of our Redeemer while in the world. How infinitely greater was his day's work than ours; yet, what was his reward? He found the most important services requited by ingratitude and slander, but his zeal never relaxed; his efforts were allowed no pause; he continued to do good, because he knew that his heavenly Father looked down with pleasure on his work.

This assurance the Christian of to-day may share with his glorious Master. Let him labour with fidelity and truth, and he will not fail to be rewarded.

How greatly is the man improved even here who is converted from sin and sensuality to God! His apprehension—his reasoning—his desires, are all changed—all elevated. It is his to exult in a submissive mind, and a purer heart. The blessed change will not fail to introduce, in the language of the Psalmist, "a good understanding." If such the advantages we may secure here, what must they be which we shall know when, separated from the infirmities of the flesh, and the incumbrances of mortality, the capacity of the soul is no longer kept down by, or entangled with the interests or pleasures of the body. By duly disciplining our minds, we may taste of heaven on earth. This is our duty, for the apostle tells us that it is open for us to imitate Christ, and strive to approach his purity and virtue, and "every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he was pure."

This shall be our ambition, a noble object which we will pursue without fainting or delay. At once let us seek to commence our work of virtue for the day. We will begin early, and persevere steadily. Our piety shall not be disturbed or turned aside by obstacles that may stand in our way, or by attacks that may be made on our faith, but we will courageously persevere to the end.

So acting, as we pass through life, we shall not at the last be left unrequited. We shall not be rejected like the wicked and slothful servant, but, through the merits of our benign Redeemer, ours will be the happiness to hear the soul-gladdening invitation which bids us, "as good and faithful servants, to enter into the joy of our Lord."

## PLEASURES OF A HOLY LIFE.

What can be pleasanter, than to depend on the providence of God for all needful supplies of temporal good; casting all our care upon him, as being assured that he careth for us; and that his eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, that he may show himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards him? What can be so pleasant as to receive all from him, and use all for him? What can be more pleasant than a life of communion with God, living upon Christ both for righteousness and strength; whose declaration shall be as surely fulfilled to us as it was to the apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee?" Is it not pleasant to enjoy beforehand the expectation of endless felicity; to look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; and already to lay hold on eternal life? Surely sobriety, temperance, chastity, and self-government, are a thousand times more pleasant than the lawless indulgence of our appetites and passions? The former will not injure the body, nor harrow up the mind, nor make a man unhappy and melancholy. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath babbling who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?" Are these the fruits of humility, and meekness and temperance? The impure, the intemperate, the self-indulgent, account themselves the votaries of pleasure, but "at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." The more

universal and ardent our love is to mankind, the more shall we enjoy the happiness of others, instead of envying it: and if it makes us grieve for their sins and miseries, yet we shall often rejoice in being made the instrument of alleviating the one, and correcting the other. Integrity and veracity will not dishonour our characters, nor burden our consciences. Complacency in good men, and disinterested benevolence to all, will not torment us, like envy and malice, pride and revenge. Generosity and beneficence will not put us to the blush like covetousness and dishonesty; the former will never make us unhappy, and, if guided by wisdom and discretion, will not

be likely to make us poorer in the end.

All her paths are peace. To walk in God's paths is acceptable to him. He said to the father of the faithful, "I am God all-sufficient; walk thou before me, and be thou perfect. "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments," said the Psalmist. "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. Oh! that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes." Though we can never walk so exactly, but that we may see much that is amiss or defective, which may well convince us that we cannot be justified by our own works; yet Christ is the way, by which we have free access to the Father, and our persons being accepted in him, our duties shall be approved for his sake. And the more religion rules in the heart, the more uninterrupted will be our communion with God; the more shall we be re-conciled to all the dispensations of his providence, and be led to unite with God's wise and gracious design in them; and the more shall we find that all things work together for our good. Thus only, by walking in wisdom's ways, can a man be self-consistent. For even self-love will make us condemn that in others, which it leads us to justify in ourselves. Thus the sinner cannot hope to excuse himself, but by the help of some disguise. He must be ashamed of his conduct under its true name. So, on the other hand, religion cannot be reproached, but under a nick name. Who will dare to speak ill of love to God, or of benevolence to man? Who shall censure honesty, truth, humility, or conscientiousness? No, bad men must slander the Christian, before they dare to revile him. His conduct must be distorted, and his principles misrepresented, and his religion called by the name of preciseness, hypocrisy, or some other unjust appellation, or they dare not reproach it. Religion is not only pleasant to ourselves, but profitable to others. All her paths are peace, as true religion will ever teach us to seek the welfare of our fellow-men, and especially to pursue the promotion of their true and highest interest. Love worketh no ill to our neigh-Ryland's Pastoral.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 21.

## RESIGNED TO GOD.

Inspirer and hearer of prayer, Thou feeder and guardian of thine, My all, to thy cov nant care, I. sleeping and waking, resign: If thou art my shield and my sun, The night is no darkness to me; And fast as my moments roll on, They bring me but nearer to thee.

Thy ministering spirits descend, To watch while thy saints are asleep; By day and by night they attend, The heirs of salvation to keep:

Bright seraphs despatched from the throne, Repair to their stations assigned; And angels elect are sent down, To guard the elect of mankind.

Thy worship no interval knows, Their fervour is still on the wing: And while they protect my repose, They chaunt to the praise of my King; I too, at the season ordain'd, Their chorus for ever shall join, And love and adore without end. Their faithful Creator, and mine.

Toplady.

#### THE RIGHTEOUS ARE GOD'S PECULIAR CARE. PSALM XCII.

1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most high:

2 To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and

thy faithfulness every night,

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

4 For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

7 When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroved for ever.

8 But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.

9 For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.

10 But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an uni-

corn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

11 Mine eye also shall see my desire on mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear my desire of the wicked that rise up against me. 12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall

grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

15 To shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

## RETURNING SPRING SHOULD AWAKEN IN CHRIS-TIANS ACTIVITY, LOVE, AND GRATITUDE.

The bounty of the eternal is so great, that it cannot be too often acknowledged in strains of animated gratitude. "O, taste, and see that the Lord is good!" was the exclamation of the holy poet; and we are especially reminded of his exulting song, by the return of the gladsome season of spring. The echo of the word of God, seems to be heard in the newly awakening soul, and at the moment when all nature displays herself, "blooming and beneficient," let us not fail to glow

with veneration and love, for him who spreads before us the fair scene which enchants our eves. We would not be of the number of those who enjoy the good which he proffers with a lavish hand, yet think not of the giver. While we accept and enjoy the various blessings placed within our reach, Oh! still let us remember the immortal author of them all. Our gain will be the greater, for we shall enjoy them the more by looking at the source whence they flow.

In the ordinary walks of life, it will be found that pious hearts most largely appreciate the comforts granted to them. They do not revel in foolish luxury, and intemperately abuse the bounty of God, but wisely use the good things he may send, as the means of proving their benevolent care for their unfortunate brethren, and acting thus, while they feel that they are fulfilling the will of him who sent them, their hearts experience a thrilling gratification of the most exalted character.

The rich endowments bestowed by the Almighty on nature in spring, were intended to give his faithful worshippers new powers. Nature was designed by him to be the faithful and indulgent nurse of his creatures. She refreshes and invigorates the mind by the matchless beauty she displays, while proffering future rewards to requite the industry of man. By her own admirable industry, ours is roused. Spurred to exertion by the changes each succeeding day produces, we start from the dull sleep of winter, and are ashamed to remain inactive.

Gracious Lord! we, who now meet before thee, desire to profit from the important hint thus supplied. We will take Nature, thy admirable Nature, for our guide, our monitor, our example. For all our brethren, our hearts shall swell with love and kindness; and, rejoicing in the means of serving them which may be ours, to thee our eyes shall be raised with love and gratitude. The vow thus made each succeeding morning shall only awaken us to renew, and each day, till the evening closes in upon us, shall be consecrated to duty.

We know, from experience, that blessings follow those who pursue the path of mercy. To them is often vouchsafed some unexpected gratification -some unsolicited, unhoped-for good. that inward satisfaction, in itself, a rich reward for a virtuous deed, the gifts of Providence frequently cheer, in a remarkable way, the progress Like the patriarch, of the upright Christian. who, entertaining strangers, found that he had an-

gels for his guests, those who labour to perform works of charity, often find that, in so doing, even their own worldly interests have been promoted. Properly viewed, all things concur to satisfy the inquiring mind that the happy are the good.

The stillness of evening comes to favour and promote solemn thoughts and devotional feelings. Now, let the warm but temperate heart seek, with offerings of sincere thanksgivings, to honour the sublime Being, who gave us, in the day which has just departed, "to taste and see that the Lord was good." To him our acknowledgments for all that he has bestowed are due, in the shape of dutiful obedience now, and unfailing confidence in his love, through the days which may follow. When his bounty is showered on us in the gifts of spring, it shall remind us of our duty to aid our poorer brethren, with such relief and comfort as our means may enable us to supply.

God of all mercy! we fervently implore thee. that, by the aid of thy favouring grace, the resolutions now formed may never be forgotten. May thy salutuary chastenings not be lost on us-may they bring forth good fruit, and glorious proofs of thy wisdom, bound up with thy mercy. We bend before thee with thanks, and vows, and pray that, by us, the renewal of these may never be forgotten, but that thou wilt receive the humble tribute devout minds seek to lay before thee with favour, and grant us all we could ask on earth, all we could desire in heaven, for the sake of thy son, the Redeemer, who lived and died for us.

#### LIFE IN CHRIST.

It appears, that life is in him, when dead sinners are made to hear his voice and live. John v. 25. Eph. ii. 1. It shall appear that life is in him, when at the last day, he will, as judge of the world, award eternal life to all his people, after having raised their bodies from the grave. John v. 28. vi. 39, 40. In him is life; and well might Peter say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." John vi. 68.

Secondly: It is here affirmed, That the life which was in Christ is the light of men.

The life that was in him, especially when here below, was the light of men, as his living example beautifully illustrates our duty, and God's gracious designs. By noticing our Lord's life, while in his state of humiliation, we see, in the clearest and most lovely manner, what sort of life his followers ought to live on earth, in all holiness, and rectitude, and benevolence. We see also, how much divine goodness was set upon the salvation of sinners, though in such a way as to condemn sin; and what encouragement we have to return to God, through his blessed Redeemer.

The life was the light of men, inasmuch as it is only in consequence of the communication of spiritual lift from Christ Jesus, that any man is enabled rightly to discern, Fren his own true interest, and to see all divine truth in a just h ;ht. Self-love is the blindest affection in the world. Mere objective light, however strong, will not suffice, unless life als , is imparted; it shines into darkness, but the darkness app ehends it not. Eternal light will not open the eyes of the blir 1; nor will the clearest revelation, without quickening influence, produce just ideas of religion; nor will mere natural strength of intellect. Hence, none are more blind, as to divine things, than many of the wise, prudent, and learned of this world. A new heart, a right spirit, will lead to a new use of the understanding; but no increase of intellectual capacity or speculative knowledge will sanctify the heart. Hence it is, that many unregenerate men talk so absurdly of the plainest truths of religion, and so inconsistently with common sense, and their own acknowledged principles. e.g. How absurd for those, who do not pretend to be Atheists, to ridicule prayer, serious concern about religion, and anxious preparation for eternity. For persons, who do not pretend to be Deists, to despise the ministry of the word; condemning, not an individual, or a number of ministers, but all who wear that character; or condemning all who take more delight in God's word and ordinances, than in what they call innocent diversions. Or for those, who do not pretend to deny gospel doctrines, yet to continue at ease in their sins. Alas! unless Christ shall impart life by his Holy Spirit, men will love darkness and rebel against the light.

The life which Christ has promised hereafter to bestow on his people, is the light of men: his promises of eternal life, animate our hopes, and are sufficient to cheer us in the gloom of adversity, and even when passing through the valley of the shadow of death. Ah! what is there but the life which Christ has brought to light by his gospel, that can afford solid satisfaction, even while we are exempt from extraordinary trouble? How much less, when we feel that we must soon leave all things here below, and enter on another state; passing into an invisible world, and having our state fixed for ever! Happy they, who, though dead to the world while in it, and expecting soon to die and leave it, have a life hid with Christ in God. Have we ever been convinced that all the descendants of the first Adam, are the subjects of spiritural death, and obnoxious to eternal death? Have we been made to feel that this is the wages of sin? Are we willing to receive eternal life as a free gift, and that imparted through the Mediator? Are we willing to live to God here, and to be led by his light and his truth, that we may live with him

forever?

Have we been made partakers of spiritual life already, being so joined unto the Lord as to be one spirit with him? having a disposition for holy activity and gracious affections, so that we can truly adopt Paul's language, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Have we, in consequence of the influence of the quickening spirit, been made light in the Lord, though we were sometime ago in darkness? Have we been brought out of that darkness into marvellous light? Oh! walk as the children of the light and of the day: have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Let your light so shine before men, that they, beholding your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Ryland's Pastoral.

## MORNING .-- APRIL 22.

#### RESIGNATION TO THE DIVINE WILL.

In cold misfortune's cheerless day, When joy and peace and love depart, When friends deceive, and hopes decay, And sorrows press the heavy heart, O Lord! Thou canst relief impart; 'Tis Thou canst cheer the wounded mind, Tis Thou canst heal affliction's smart-Teach us to pray, and be resigned.

And oh! should changeful fortune frown, Or those we love prove true no more, Should death's relentless hand strike down Those who return'd the love we bore: Still let us worship and adore, And seek the peace we yet may find;— Teach us, O Father! we implore, To trust in Thee, and be resigned!

Mackay.

## THE WORK OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL BE PEACE. ISAIAH. XXXII.

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful.

6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

7 The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even

when the needy speaketh right.

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.

9 TRise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters, give ear unto my speech.

10 Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins.

12 They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.

13 Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and

briers: yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city:

14 Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude
of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.

15 Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

18 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

FAITHFUL TO DUTY, THE CHRISTIAN THROWS ALL HIS CARES ON THE LORD.

The heathen moralists were careful to teach, in their writings, that men ought, under circumstances of the greatest gloom and peril, to hope for a happy result. Not less is the Christian mind to be bold in the hour of danger, and look forward to brighter days. " Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you," is the advice which the sojourner here receives from the scripture. It is a declaration of no small importance, and he who duly attends to it, will commence every new day of his life with cheerfulness and fortitude. He will not be distressed and alarmed by the reflection that men have every day new perils to meet, but he will feel that if every day brings its trouble, God is all-sufficient. He will supply new courage, new strength, and so order it, that the evil we have to face shall be accomplished with new blessings; and the greater the difficulty, the more glorious the triumph which the follower of Jesus will gain, if he do but bear himself as behoves the soldier of a captain so illustrious.

In order to do this, when we have the happiness to look on a day of unclouded joy, we must hasten to avail ourselves of it, to cure the wounds which our hearts have sustained in days gone by. and to strengthen and to reassure ourselves, that we may be prepared for future trials. The present boon should be accepted with grateful exultation as a mark of divine grace. We should cheerfully, but temperately indulge, taking care to guard against wantonness or unseeming frivolity. In the midst of our enjoyments, the precarious character of all mundane happiness should be constantly kept in view, nor ought we to presume too arrogantly to pronounce that the comfort, or even the safety, which is ours to-day, will remain to us to-

morrow.

On the other hand, if, after witnessing many days of prosperity, for us, perhaps in some measure from our own fault, the scene should be mournfully changed, and heavy calamities try our courage and assail our peace, Oh then let us humble ourselves before the God we adore, be careful not to forget the kindness we have known in the days which are fled, and forbear to repine. Bowed down by the chastening hand of the mighty One, we must still each rising murmur that would betray us into unmanly despair. It must be our task to fix our attention on all the alleviating circumstances which can be discovered, on all the blessings which

are permitted to remain within our reach; and thankful for these, forbid our patience or our confidence in the goodness of the omnipotent Father of all, to know abatement. Thus shall we approach nearer to our God, while attempting by resignation and unvielding faith, to tread in the

footsteps of our Saviour.

"Come what may," the Christian should say to his heart, "duty must be fulfilled." We may be discouraged, and the result of labours we deem meritorious, will often prove the opposite of that which we fondly hoped to witness, but still we must remain faithful to our trust, and preserve our confidence unshaken. As Job in the day of his returning happiness was glad, the Christian, when his pains abate, may rejoice, but, like Job, in the day of adversity, he must still rely on the mercy of the Eternal, and be prepared with him to exclaim, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Duty must be satisfied whatever the immediate consequences. Little would be its merit if only performed for the sake of instant reward. The patriarch entertained the fainting stranger, not because he was an angel, but because hospitality was a duty. Without such a glorious visitation, the true believer sees enough to lead him onward in the right path, in the promise of peace of mind in this life, and heaven hereafter.

Sustained by these reflections, we desire to gain new strength from the cheering hopes held out to us in the word of God. The cross which it may be his pleasure to impose upon us, he doubtless sends, the more effectually to extricate us from the snares and vanities which surround us in the world, and to lift us to a higher moral elevation. Closely to the Lord we desire to cling, as the fond ivy to the oak, as the tendril to the vine. The love of our brethren, it will be our care to gain by kindness and friendly exertions, to entitle us to their soothing attentions in the day of sorrow. May we so improve our happier moments, that, when past, they leave no sting, no bitter reflection behind. May our hearts learn to look at the sorrows we know as the instruments of thy justice and mercy, O Lord! as contributing to favour our advance to everlasting happiness. We will never cease to feel that thou carest for us, and all our cares we cast upon thee.

THE CARNAL MIND IS OPPOSED TO THE LOVE OF GOD.

Before all worlds, before any being was formed, "God is

love"-love, eternal and unchangeable. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is love.

How inconceivably great is the love of God! All worlds rolling in the infinite expanse; all beings inhabiting those innumerable spheres, which extend far beyond the boundaries of the most excursive imagination; all the myriads of angelic spirits, which dwell for ever in the bright effulgence of uncreated light: are only the overflowings of that love, which is inexhaustible.

The immense fountain loses not one drop, though countless millions are filled by its streams. It is ever-flowing, everfull. Lord, thou art love. O! fill my soul with thy love. Thou canst not be diminished, and I shall be made everlastingly blessed.

When the Almighty created the angels in heaven, and man in paradise, he endued them with powers suited to their dis-

tinctive degrees of excellence.

Both were formed holy, and consequently happy.

All nature proclaims the benevolence of the deity: the unbounded goodness of Jehovah.

The moral law emanated from the love of God. This law was stamped upon the heart of Adam, when in a state of innocence. It is a transcript of the divine mind; holy, just,

When man sinned, he broke the law of love. He fell under its curse. To redeem him from this wretched state, Jesus, the son of God, assumed our mortal nature; expiated our guilt, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. He burst the bars of death. He ascended up on high; and reigns the sovereign Lord of angels and of men.

When the "royal law" of love was broken in paradise, how soon did Adam's first-born imbrue his hand in a brother's blood! Violence overspread the earth with awful rapidity; till God, in righteous judgment, swept the guilty rebels from the earth, by a tremendous flood of waters.

Every succeeding age has been marked by miseries of every name, all flowing from one common source-an evil heart of unbelief. Sin is the cause of misery, and sin originates with

If it be asked, what is the true cause of man's inability to love and serve God? may we not answer, a criminal indisposition of heart so to do? It is not that man cannot love God, from a natural incapacity, arising from a total destitution of understanding, will, and affections; but rather that he will not, owing to a deep rooted enmity against the holy character

and commands of God.

This aversion of the heart from God, constitutes the chief guilt of man. Man is a responsible being, and must render an account to God, from whom he receives all his powers, for the abuse of those talents committed to his trust. He can love the world; he can love sensual delights; he can love riches and honours, yea, everything which tends to gratify his passions, and to exalt him in his own eyes, or in the estimation of others. He has a will to choose what is pleasing to his animal appetites; and to refuse what is painful or distasteful to him. He has an understanding to judge upon worldly matters; and a quick eye to discover the path to temporal advancement. He finds his hopes and fears, his joys and griefs, his love and hatred, brought into continual exercise with the ever-varying events of life.

Hence man does not labour under a natural incapacity. His inability is altogether of a moral kind. Sin has darkened and corrupted all the higher faculties of the soul; so that now "the world by wisdom knows not God." "Men choose darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;" for

"the carnal mind is enmity against God."

Christian Retirement.

<sup>&</sup>quot;God is love!" sweet truth. O! my soul, rejoice daily in 'his blessed revelation: "God is love."

## EVENING .-- APRIL 22.

#### CHRIST THE SINNER'S REFUGE.

Jesus, lover of my soul,

Let me to thy bosom fly;

While the nearer waters roll,

While the tempest still is high.

Hide me, O my Saviour! hide, Till the storm of life is past, Safe into the haven guide, O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none; Hangs my helpless soul on thee; Leave, ah! leave me not alone; Still support and comfort me.

All my trust on thee is stay'd,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wings.

Golden Treasury.

ADMONISH THOSE WHO SEEM HARDENED IN SIN.
HEBREWS, III.

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the

beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;
15 While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden
not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

# THE TRUE CHRISTIAN LIVES NOT FOR HIMSELF ALONE.

We stand not alone in this world, nor can we perform our duty without carefully reflecting how our actions will be likely to affect others. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was the rude answer of the first murderer to the Lord, when he was questioned respecting Abel. Every man is in some degree what Cain was, inclined to deny that he

had been, his brother's keeper. Each is intended to be in some way the keeper, the protector, the provider for others.

It may be profitable to reflect what we owe to our fellow-men. They do much in a great variety of ways to cheer our spirits, to render us secure, to embellish life, and render it fruitful of enjoyment. They add to our pleasures, to our utility, and enable us more influentially to exert ourselves for the advantage of our families, and for society generally, than we could otherwise hope to do. The interchange of tokens of love and sympathy is greatly facilitated by the labours of men who are to us unknown. Owe we not, then, to them a duty in return, and are we not bound to watch over their lives and comforts as far as may be possible?

Ill at ease would a sincere Christian feel, could he foresee that injurious and pernicious effects would be produced by him on the health, fortunes, and lives of others who are near to him. His heart would not fail to reproach him, if he saw his fellow men deeply affected by mortifications or annoyances of which he was the cause. Would it not accuse him of having robbed them of so much of their lives as they had passed in sorrow, from having suffered cruel wrongs, or endured exasperating insults?

In our own cases, we feel acutely how dangerously vexation, anger, grief and alarm, may affect us. If such our case, may not others feel these things still more severely? That thought should admonish us to move with great circumspection. It is the duty of a pious man to guard with all his might against any sudden ebullition of passion, which may prove fatal to the peace of another. We must be evermore on the watch against ourselves. Remembering that we are in a measure our brother's keeper, we must regard his well-being, if we would preserve our own peace of mind.

Let each of us hold it to be a sacred duty, where he can, to save another from unmerited suffering, and to promote the comfort of those who feel interested for us. Thus only can we satisfy ourselves, if our feelings are what they ought to be. By straining every nerve, to alleviate the sorrows of our suffering brethren, we shall properly act our part, and gain, in due time, a fitting reward. Let us sympathize with all around us, weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. If we carry hope to the bosom of affliction, and inspire courage in the heart that had aban-

doned itself to despair, we have possibly done much to prolong the sufferer's existence, and by giving him an opportunity for seeking favour from above—have possibly contributed to his everlasting happiness. This we must do, if we would imitate the Saviour whom we profess to follow; for who, like him, ever so unceasingly

laboured to relieve suffering?

Nor must we, regarding ourselves as the keepers of a brother, omit to call back the wanderer from virtue, to the path which leads to heaven. by timely admonition. Impressive expostulation addressed to the sinner, with mildness and brotherly love, may open his eyes to the error of his ways, and restore him to the flock from which he

has fatally straved.

Delightful will be the reflection, in after years, that, acting in the spirit of Christ, we have saved an erring or broken-hearted brother. If by gentle care, and persevering exhortation, we bring the thoughtless to reflect on sacred things, and make them aware of the tremendous dangers to which their levity exposes them, we may rejoice that we have more than saved their lives.

It may turn out that those we attempt to benefit will not always be grateful, and that wellintended caution will be answered with contumely or reproach. At this we should not be discouraged. Our efforts must not be discontinued because they are not in the first instance crowned with success. We should not abandon the hope of serving our fellows; we should not cease to let our light shine before them. Our exhortations shall be devoted to wake in them zeal, to strengthen their courage, and awake their consciences to a sense of what they owe to God.

As our brother's keeper, we must feel anxious to protect and preserve the body and soul, the goods and fair name of our neighbour. Regarding this as a solemn duty which we have to perform, being appointed to it by the great Creator of the universe, when fulfilled, will largely add to our enjoyment, give a satisfied sense of dignity, and a higher value to life; while it is not too much to hope, it will create for us a greater claim to the care and protection of our common Father, as well as to the approving smile of our Saviour. It will thus sow the seed of a rich harvest of peace of mind here below, and of everlasting glory in the world to come.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S VINDICATION.

While we look upon God, as the Giver of all good things, we can never think he stands in need of the material and gross oblations of men, but we are taught, and most firmly believe and know, that they only are the acceptable worshippers of God, who form their minds by the mind eternal, and express it in temperance, justice, humanity, and such other virtues as are the essential excellencies of the Divine Nature, or the more proper inmost perfections of Him, who is a God unnameable; and this Almighty Being, so good in himself, made all things in the beginning for the good of man, out of a chaos of rude ill-favoured matter; and they who walk according to his will, and demonstrate their worthiness by their works, we are sure will be admitted into the divine presence, there to reign with him, where corruption and suffering never come. For as he created us at first, when we were not, so by the same power will he restore us to being again, and crown with the immortal enjoyment of himself, such as have made it their choice to please their Maker; for though we had no choice in our creation, yet in our regeneration we have; for God persuades only, and draws us gently in our regeneration, by co-operating freely with those rational powers he has bestowed upon us.

Our Master, Jesus Christ, from whom we take the name of Christians, the Son and Apostle of that God, who is the Supreme Lord and Maker of the universe, has foretold our sufferings; which to us is a manifest confirmation of the truth of all his other doctrines, because we see these things fulfilled according to his prediction; for this or nothing is the work of God, to declare a thing shall come to be, long before it is in being, and then to bring about that thing to pass according

to the same declaration.

And now I might spare myself the trouble of saying a word more, considering the truth and justice of our proposals; but because I am sensible how difficult a task it is for men bowed down with aged ignorance, to be set straight in a moment; and for a farther satisfaction to the lovers of truth, I shall enlarge in its defence, knowing it not impossible, to get the better of ignorance by setting matters in a fuller light.

In the first place, then, it is certain we cannot justly be branded for atheists; we who worship the Creator of the universe, not with blood, libations, and incense, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands in no need of ) but we exalt him to the best of our power with the rational service of prayers and praises, in all the oblations we make unto him; believing this to be the only honour worthy of him, not to consume the creatures which he has given us for our use, and the comfort of those that want, in the fire by sacrifice; but to approve ourselves thankful to him, and to express this gratitude in the rational pomp of the most solemn hymns at the altar in acknowledgment of our creation, reservation, and all the blessings of variety in things and seasons; and also for the hopes of a resurrection to a life incorruptible, which we are sure to have for asking, provided we ask in faith.

Justin Martyr.

## MORNING.—APRIL 23.

LET OUR CRY BE RAISED TO GOD.

My God, in whom are all the springs Of boundless love, and grace unknown; Hide me beneath thy spreading wings, Till the dark cloud is overblown,

Up to the heavens I send my ery, The Lord will my desires perform; He sends his angel from the sky, And saves me from the threatening storm.

Be thou exalted, O my God, Above the heavens where angels dwell; Thy power on earth be known abroad, And land to land thy wonders tell.

My heart is fix'd; my song shall raise Immortal honours to thy name; Awake, my tongue, to sound his praise, My tongue, the glory of my frame.

High o'er the earth thy mercy reigns, And reaches to the utmost sky; His truth to endless years remains. When lower worlds dissolve and die.

Be thou exalted, O my God, Above the heavens where angels dwell; Thy power on earth be known abroad, And land to land thy wonders tell.

Watts.

## SALVATION SECURED TO THE SINCERE BELIEVER. ROMANS, X.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach ;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

GOD WILL NOT LISTEN TO HYPOCRITES OR LUKE-WARM WORSHIPPERS.

Much are they misled who think that the exact observance of certain prescribed forms, can, without any determined effort of the heart, render them

acceptable in the sight of God. "They that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." This important announcement is laid down in the Bible in the plainest language. So important a commandment of our Redeemer no one can affect to misunderstand. Can we proclaim that we have always borne it in mind, and obeyed it? Something more than the mere mechanical habit of placing ourselves in the attitude of prayer in the morning and in the evening, and the repetition of certain solemn sentences, are necessary to constitute that worship, which alone is worthy of the Deity. Vain repetitions in which the heart is not engaged, can no more avail than the rotatory motion of that wheel or machine, which the Japanese are in the habit of turning to propitiate the Most High. Have we prayed with fervent devotion? If we are unable to answer this with a ready, cheerful, and sincere affirmative, are we worthy of the Christian name? and in its absence, can we flatter ourselves that our prayers will be acceptable to God—to that God who is no respecter of persons, and who sees the heart.

Alas! Dare we give the answer "yes," to the important question? Have our hearts, when we have professed to engage in prayer, been filled with veneration, love, and confidence? Have we felt moved as we ought to be, while soliciting an important boon from the author of our being?—a sacred assurance that he would grant what was most for our good, though he should see fit to withhold the immediate object of our supplication. We have, unhappily, often prayed with our lips, and our hearts have not been engaged in the thanks our tongues have been taught to utter. We have neither felt that God would grant us his blessing, nor that that blessing is indispensable to our well-being in this world, and our everlasting happiness in the world to come.

From ourselves our weakness must not be concealed; our faults may not be palliated. If we search our bosoms, we cannot but discover that we have frequently sinned against God, and against Christ, by our culpable indifference to sacred things. Our hearts have been cold and void of feeling; they have been absorbed with the sordid cares of the world, or have harboured presumption, discontent, and forgetfulness of God. This sad delusion, of which we see the folly, we cannot but own has been ours. Deeply ought we to lament that of this we have now to accuse our-

But since such is our present condition, we



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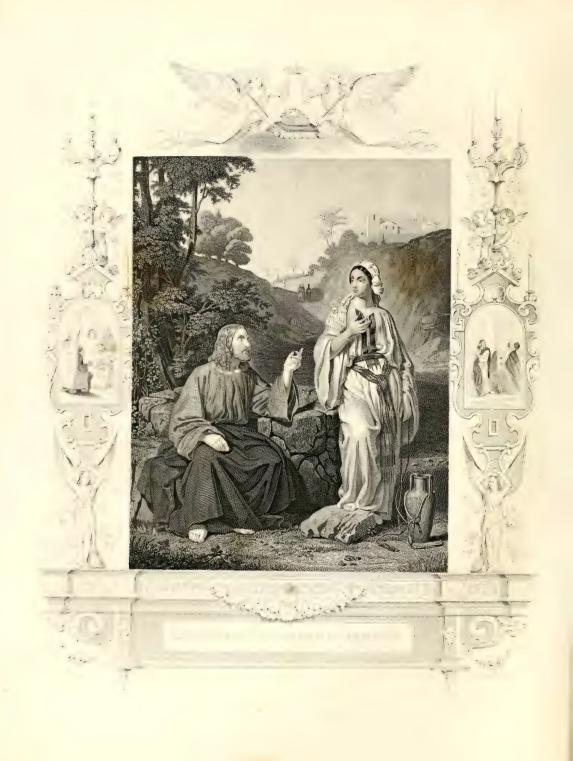
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must do more than vainly lament the past; we will form solid and virtuous resolutions for the future. Pious thoughts and holy purposes shall strengthen the feeble heart, and re-animate the faith which seemed expiring within us, and our whole souls shall learn to glow with true devotion.

Of this we are capable, and it will be our own fault if we become not what Christians ought to be. We feel in our nature disposed to meditate on celestial things. Born in a land of letters, where the gospel is constantly before our eyes, we may boast that we have Christ himself for our teacher, and he has left us the model of a prayer suited to all ages, to all conditions of men, which we are directed to use, when we would address our God. His example we can constantly study, and within ourselves we feel that we are children of light, and that Omnipotence looks down upon us with favour, regarding us as his own. He sees us from afar: he knows our wishes: and the pravers devoutly breathed, those only he will graciously accept. Hypocrites he spurns from before him. They, knowing him, and knowing themselves, cannot hope for his blessing. and heartless repetitions of solemn appeals, in which the mind has no concern, cannot impose upon him. It is the heart that he requires. Oh, may we now and henceforth pray in the right way, ever remembering that he will only hearthat he will only grant his favouring attention to those who worship him in spirit and in truth.

HOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST IS TO BE PROVED BY THE CHRISTIAN.

If we would remember a dying Saviour, we must first learn to love him; to love him not with a cold veneration and regard merely, but with a lively, heart-felt affection; to love him as that poor woman loved him, who washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head; as that noble Paul loved him, who counted all things but loss that he might win him; who could stand up among weeping friends, and say, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus." It is not sufficient, my brethren, that we speak respectfully of Christ, pray in his name, come to his house, and go to his table: there must be a deep, a tender love for him in our hearts, a love, which can make us often think of him, often talk of him, pray to him, and praise him.

Hence, to remember Christ implies also a frequent and affectionate recalling of him to our minds. We are not merely to recollect him and think of him, when we hear others speak of him, and when we are in his house or at his table; we are to maintain an habitual remembrance of him; to carry him constantly about with us in our hearts wherever we go; to have him as our companion in all our employments, our pleasures, our sorrows, and our cares.

This remembrance too must be affectionate; it must interest the feelings and touch the heart. It will not indeed always affect us in the same degree, for we are not always equally susceptible of the same tender impressions. heart even of the established Christian is often cold and dead, so dead that nothing seems to have power to move it: but even in its coldest season, a thought of Jesus will often warm and enliven it. The remembrance of his dying love seems to restore the soul to its wonted feeling, and to reanimate its lifeless powers. There are seasons in the Christian's life, in which the name of Jesus comes to his heart like a live coal from the altar, and brings with it a warmth, a feeling, and a joy, which an angel might come down from heaven to share. Without some degree of this affection, our remembrance of Christ, however frequent, is an empty, formal thing; it is no criterion of sincere love to him, and proves nothing as to our character. The faithful wife, when she thinks of a husband in the grave, does not think of him with cold indifference; a tender parent does not think unmoved of the mouldering corpse of a beloved child. Religion must be tasted and felt, brethren, or it is nothing worth. If it does not get into our affections, it will never save our souls.

Bradley.

## EVENING .-- APRIL 23.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOOD.

That man is blest who stands in awe
Of God, and loves his sacred law:
His seed on earth shall be renown'd;
His house the seat of wealth shall be,
An inexhausted treasury,
And with successive honours crown'd.

His liberal favours he extends,
To some he gives, to others lends:
A generous pity fills his mind;
Yet what his charity impairs,
He saves by prudence in affairs,
And thus he's just to all mankind.

His hands, while they his alms bestow'd,
His glory's future harvest sow'd:
The sweet remembrance of the just,
Like a green root, revives and bears
A train of blessings for his heirs,
When dying nature sleeps in dust.

Beset with threat'ning dangers round, Unmoved shall he maintain his ground; His conscience holds his courage up: The soul that's filled with virtue's light, Shines brightest in affliction's night; And sees in darkness beams of hope.

Watts.

DO GOOD IN THE NAME OF THE SAVIOUR, GIVING THANKS
TO GOD. COLOSSIANS III.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness. long-suffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the

bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father

hy him

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as

it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against

them. 20 Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they

be discouraged.

22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord,

and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done.

## FRIENDSHIP A BLESSING SENT FROM HEAVEN.

"And certain of the chiefs of ours sent unto him, desiring that he would not adventure himself into the theatre." This kind and considerate intimation, sent to the apostle, must have gladdened his heart to find that he was the object of such generous care with the friends he esteemed. Spared the hardships and the dangers which the immediate followers of Jesus had to meet, we are permitted to know the delight of receiving marks of sympathizing love, from friends who are most dear Greatly have our joys been heightened, to us. greatly our griefs alleviated, by such proofs of affection, and still more, they have tended to give a better tone to our hearts, to strengthen and sanctify our minds. The noblest, the most precious gift of life, would be wanting, were friendship withdrawn. Woe to the selfish man who has found no friend, who is worthy of no friend. When he languishes in pain, who will pour oil and wine into his wounds? who soothe his cares when his mind is ill at ease? who caution him when he is in danger? who raise him when he falls? Such a man has no faithful friend to guide his faltering steps in the right way, should he find himself bewildered in his pilgrimage through life. Melancholy must be the solitude, the desolation of the heart of such a man; his position not less deplorable than that of the shipwrecked mariner, surrounded by a stormy sea, and alone on a desolate island.

O! loveliest, sweetest child of heaven, soulcheering, soothing Friendship, the blessings of which thou art the bringer are too numerous to be described! Thou seemest, to the eyes of unsophisticated mortals, an angel sent from God with a joyful message! Thou art the great comforter of life, that which is not to be purchased or paid for in money, and a jewel all the more costly and rare if found in one person, who, from his position, shares the joys of our childhood, the labours of our youth, and is never severed from us till gathered to his fathers, by time, in old age.

Is friendship, genuine friendship, a treasure of such surpassing value—a good so costly? Then let us for a moment inquire, who is it that brings minds together in a way so wonderful? Whose wise dispensations fitted the souls of men to meet in sweet communion, and gave them the same emotions and corresponding thoughts? Who prepared them to harmonise, and caused them to find each other? The precious gift is thine, Oh God! Deign, mighty Governor of human destinies! to accept, unworthy as we are of bounty so great, our sincere and hearty acknowledgments that we are not strangers to the blessing that thou hast been pleased to bestow upon us, in sincere and constant friends. May we prove ourselves worthy of the godlike gift! In earlier or in later life, may we shew ourselves not wanting in faithful attachment; may our stern and steady friendship be found proof against every temptation, against every danger that shall attempt to Never let us exhibit that undermine or assail. fickleness in friendship that we have manifested to one constant exalted friend, our Saviour, Jesus, who has watched over us from the moment of our first entering into life.

But here, recalling our conduct, in regard to the Redeemer of man, an accusing conscience almost overpowers us. In our hearts we are troubled, and our pulses seem as if they ceased to beat. Great, sublime, eternal Friend of all! how often have we offended, by our culpable neglect, not only of thee, but of ourselves! How cold towards thee have been our bosoms—those bosoms which it was thy glorious object to warm with unspeakable happiness; which thou hadst

resolved to save from perdition, and to lead to glory?

Meanly forgetful as we have been of thy love, can we keep faith with our brethren, and prove ourselves worthy of a mortal friendship? Never can that be, Oh Lord! till duly penetrated with a sense of the value of thine, we can rejoice in the hope that it is appreciated and returned.

On what thy love, then, has done for us, it shall be our care, and delightful task, to meditate. and to return it as thy word directs. Thy voice has declared, "Ye are my friends, if ye do what I command you." Oh, gracious Saviour! since it is thus, we declare that it shall be the study of our lives, henceforth, more fully and faithfully to perform all that thou hast given in charge. Whatever we feel thou hast commanded us to do, shall be done. This we now sincerely promise to our Lord and Saviour. We breathe the determination in the presence of the stars of heaven; and they, and he who leadeth them out by their number, are witnesses to the vows. We resolve to observe it, to forget it never; but alas! we are weak. Assist, cheer, and favour us, O God! by thy heart-cheering smile, that we may never fail.

#### SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIPS.

St. Paul sharply reproves the Corinthian church for their want of unity: "Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions; are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" Whilst to the Ephesian converts, he gives this beautiful exhortation: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

It may be asked: "Is it possible that all who profess to believe in the truths of the Bible, will ever be brought to see everything in the same light, and to follow in every minute particular the same truck of thinking and acting?"

This unity may and ought to be maintained, in the grand essentials of the gospel. And a beautiful union of faith and practice, of sentiment and feeling, does exist among real Christians, of all denominations, however they may differ about the terms and explications of some abstrusive doctrines, or respecting the outward forms and modes of church government: "for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." "It is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." When these holy characters freely unbosom their hearts to each other, and discourse together on experimental and practical subjects; they find themselves standing on one common ground—connected by one common tie—united in one common cause—and drinking into one and the self-same spirit.

They all mourn over, and are deeply humbled on account of the corruption of their nature and the sin of their lives. They all feel the plague of their own hearts, and so groan, being burdened. They all are conscious of their utter inability to save themselves. They all know that they are naturally without strength. They are all enabled, through grace, to look unto Jesus, the eternal Son of God, as their only Saviour, whose blood cleanseth them from all sin; whose merits, received and applied by faith, form their only justifying righteousness; whose intercession for them prevails with God; whose promised gift, the spirit of truth, dwells in their hearts, causing them to cry with filial love and confidence, Abba, Father.

They all know and feel that they thus become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and enjoying the presence and grace of their heavenly Father through this Son of his love, they are all enabled to resist the devil, to crucify the flesh, to renounce the world, and gradually to perfect holiness

in the fear of God.

They all confess how low their highest efforts fall beneath the elevated standard of Gospel holiness; yet forgetting the things which are behind, they press forward towards those things which are before; and long for that happy period, when having laid down their bodies of sin and death, they shall shine in spotless purity in the courts above.

With these feelings and impressions, they all confess themselves to be pilgrims and strangers upon earth. Their hearts are set upon things above. They sympathize with each other's sorrows, and gladden with each other's joys. They love to bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

As they all believe in the glorious doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; and in the divine and human nature of Jesus Christ; so they unitedly confess themselves to be sinners saved by grace through faith in a crucified Redeemer, and ascribe all their salvation, from first to last, to the free, unmerited mercy of God in Christ. Thus, while they acknowledge the justice of that sentence, which condemns them as sinners to everlasting misery; they extol the vastness of that love, which so freely saves them from the wrath to come. With these holy views of the truth, they can each say from the heart,

"My power is lost—the fault is wholly mine; Yet bid me live—the glory shall be thine."

Now if every faithful follower of Jesus can subscribe to these common points of Christian doctrine and experience, what is it that divides and separates the true family of Christ?

Christian Retirement.

## MORNING .-- APRIL 24.

THE DAYS OF MOURNING SHALL BE ENDED.

Oh! weep not for the joys that fade
Like evening lights away—
For hopes that, like the stars decay'd,
Have left thy mortal day;
For clouds of sorrow will depart,
And brilliant skies be given:
And though on earth the tear may start,
Yet bliss awaits the holy heart
Amid the bowers of heaven.

Oh! weep not for the friends that pass
Into the lonesome grave,
As breezes sweep the wither'd grass
Along the restless wave;
For though thy pleasures may depart,
And darksome days be given,—
And lonely though on earth thou art,
Yet bliss awaits the holy heart
When friends rejoin in heaven.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

GOD'S ARM SUSTAINS AND SAVES HIS PEOPLE.
PSALM LXXVII.

13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God!

14 Thou art the God that doest wonders; thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

15 Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.

18 The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

# ALL THAT BENEFITS MAN IS ORDAINED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

There is one God, the author of all nature. "See now that I am he, and there is no God with me," says the Lord. That he is the only one, that he is great and good, our hearts feel and acknowledge. What the holy scriptures teach, our own experience proclaims to us every day. To him whatever we know of good is to be ascribed; from whatever evil we escape, to him we owe our deliverance. Whatever provides for our comfort and security; whatever promotes the success of our exertions, all comes from the He is the giver of all, in removing our strength, in supplying that courage that enables us to contend with difficulties; and eventually to triumph over every obstacle that opposes our progress.

May our confidence in the God who made us continue from time to time to increase. Without his protection all our best efforts would be vain, but if we fix our thoughts on him, he will not fail to guide our footsteps into paths of peace and happiness.

And let us ask our hearts, what without him could we accomplish? To his bounty, to his wise

and kind providence we owe it, that those circumstances, incidents, and connections, were prepared, which have thus far favoured us on the road of life. But for them, the unavailing will to do, without ability to perform, would have been all to which we should have found ourselves equal. His bountiful and marvellous dispensations have removed from our path difficulties which, had not his outstretched arm been on our side, we should never have been able to conquer.

It is he who has condescended to inform our minds, to wake in our hearts lively emotions, to animate our zeal, strengthen our hopes, and teach us sincerely to love all the good. For that thou, Lord, hast been mighty in us, thy feeble children, we tender thee our humble hearty thanks. Thou hast supported and guarded us when ruin and destruction threatened to overwhelm, while engaged in the performance of those duties which belong to our station.

The consciousness that we are thy instruments—that blessed consciousness alone gives us force, and renders us equal to the performance of labour, which otherwise we should attempt with no prospect of success. To know that we might call for thy special assistance, has given us strength which nothing else could supply.

Mighty and marvellous are thy ways, O Lord! They pass our comprehension, and meet our wants in a way which we could not have imagined. It is thine to fix every one in that place which he is appointed to fill. Thy directing hand it is which gives man that direction, which may render him useful to his brethren, and cause his exertions to prove beneficial to himself. Thou guidest us towards those whose co-operation may tend to our worldly benefit, and stimulate us to that moral exertion which, in future days, we shall rejoice in as the source of everlasting good. The assurance of this, as a pledge of thy love, is no mean blessing. On earth it gives us a blissful communion with thee; it saves our hearts from fainting, and enables us to move forward in the right direction with unfailing zeal.

To gain a blessing so large, and to preserve it entire, is now the theme of our earnest supplication. Be all selfish and interested emotions put away from us. O, enlarge our understandings, and purify our hearts, that all our thoughts, for the time to come, may be consecrated to God, and withdrawn from the vanities of life. Claiming thy aid, our great ambition must be to render ourselves acceptable in the sight of our cternal

Creator, while all the honours known to manwealth, joy, and renown, are deemed valueless. The want of all these on earth, will be largely requited in heaven. We look forward to a glory which is not of this world; we look to receive thy approving smile from our love for that Jesus whom thou hast sent to work out the salvation of man. May we, by reverencing his precepts, and by attempting to tread in his footsteps, become worthy of thy blessing. By the influence of thy Holy Spirit, Oh bountiful Father, who willest not the death of a sinner, may we be so aided, and so invigorated, that we may ever find ourselves ready and willing to obey thy call. We feel, we know thy grace to be all-sufficient. Lord, let this be ever present to our souls, that we may unceasingly prefer to thee our prayers in the fulness of love, and in the confidence of immortal hope.

ALL MORTAL AFFAIRS RULED BY GOD, NOT BY CHANCE.

I appeal to any man of reason, whether anything can be more unreasonable, than obstinately to impute an effect to chance, which carries in the very face of it all the arguments and characters of a wise design and contrivance? Was ever any considerable work, in which there was required great variety of parts, and a regular and orderly disposition of those parts, done by chance? Will chance fit means to ends, and that in ten thousand instances, and not fail in any one? How often might a man, after he had jumbled a set of letters in a bag, fling them out upon the ground before they would fall into an exact poem, yea, or so much as make a good discourse in prose? And may not a little book be as easily made by chance, as this great volume of the world? How long might a man be in sprinkling colours upon canvass with a careless hand, before they would happen to make the exact picture of a man? And is a man easier made by chance than his picture? How long might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent out from the several remote parts of England, wander up and down, before they would all meet upon Salisbury plains and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army? And yet this is much more easy to be imagined. than how the innumerable blind parts of matter should ren-dezvous themselves into a world. A man that sees Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster, might with as good reason maintain (yea, with much better, considering the vast difference betwixt that little structure, and the huge fabric of the world) that it was never contrived or built by any man, but that the stones did by chance grow into those curious figures into which they seem to have been cut and graven; and that upon a time (as tales usually begin) the materials of that building, the stone, mortar, timber, iron, lead, and glass, happily met together, and very fortunately, ranged themselves into that delicate order in which we see them now so close compacted, that it must be a very great chance that parts them again. What would the world think of a man that should advance such an opinion as this, and write a book for it? If they would do him right, they ought to look upon him as mad; but yet with a little more reason than any man can have to say, that the world was made by chance, or that the first men grew up out of the earth as plants do now. For can anything be more ridiculous and against all reason, than to ascribe the production of men to the first fruitfulness of the earth, without so much as one instance and experiment in any age or history, to countenance so monstrous a supposition? The thing is at first sight so gross and palpable, that no discourse about it can make it more apparent.

Tillotson.

#### EVENING.—APRIL 24.

MEN SELF-PUNISHED.

Vain man on foolish pleasures bent, Prepares for his own punishment; What pains, what loathsome maladies From luxury and lust arise!

The drunkard feels his vitals waste; Yet drowns his health to please his taste; 'Till all his active powers are lost, And fainting life draws near the dust.

The glutton groans, and loaths to eat His soul abhors delicious meat; Nature with heavy loads opprest Would yield to death to be releas'd.

Then how the frighted sinners fly To God for help with earnest cry! He hears their groans, prolongs their breath, And saves them from approaching death.

No med'cines could effect the cure So quick, so easy, or so sure: The deadly sentence God repeals, He sends his sov'reign word, and heals.

O may the sons of men record The wondrous goodness of the Lord! And let their thankful offering prove How they adore their Maker's love.

Watts.

GOD'S AWFUL JUDGMENT. PSALM LXXVI.

5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a deep sleep.
7 Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand

7 Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven: the earth feared, and was still,

9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth.

GOD'S JUSTICE, IF DELAYED, CANNOT BE ELUDED.

"But when man slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." If in ancient days while mer. slept, danger was

abroad, the same evil is still to be deplored. is while we sleep in the darkness of the night that the time for sowing tares arrives, and the gloom which prevails, is at once productive of crime, and the protector of evil doers. While the honest man stretches himself on his couch to seek in sleep relief from the toil of the day, the wicked enemy of his race enters upon his career of crime, to disturb the rest of the weary one, or to take advantage of his unconscious state to ac-

complish his ruin It is a sad—a melancholy reflection, that the solemnity of night cannot check the sinner in the course of crime; but far from doing so, it encourages him to act against the peace of society. There are vices which shun the light of day, that when the shadowy veil of nature has fallen on the world, like the owls, thrust themselves impudently forward in the hour of darkness, when they only calculate on being seen by their equally culpable fellows. But it may be asked, does not the great Governor of the world arrest them in the progress of their crime? Can the profligate mock his justice and his wrath, at the midnight hour. without dread of certain punishment? This may perplex mortal understanding, but while the stars are praising the Lord of Hosts, it is not for us to impeach that government which we can but imperfectly comprehend, but which the magnificence of the heavens compels us to admire. Not yet does it appear what we are ultimately to become. but does not the justice of the Most High, in countless instances, visit those who sow tares, while their fellow men are asleep? Look at the multitude of criminals on whom judgment here below has been pronounced—who are now immured in a dreary dungeon, or who, on the scaffold, have already paid the dread forfeit of life for life. Where we cannot unravel the designs of the Eternal, we must learn to trust; we must look forward to that day when the Lord will be pleased to render his justice manifest, and doing so, we shall cease to murmur, or even to doubt. If he do not always check and prevent-or if he do not promptly requite with terrifying vengeance, that guilt which the ungodly perpetrate while men are asleep, we may rest assured that nothing escapes his eye, and the sinner will only enjoy temporary impunity.

The danger which approaches the bed on which we recline, we cannot always perceive as it advances; but thou, our Creator, and our God, knowest all things, and if it be thy pleasure that

Grant that our own weakness, love of worldly pleasure, and blind imprudence, may not lead us into danger. How can we presume to hope that we shall remain the objects of thy ceaseless care, if we culpably neglect those means of self-preservation which are obviously within our reach? Can we murmur at thy heavy dispensations, if we recklessly expose ourselves to perils, which by an exercise of common prudence, we may easily avoid. If we expose our peace of mind, or our bodily security, to danger, without being compelled to do so, the blame is ours, as the suffering must be

"Father who art in heaven!" before thee devoutly bending, we now implore thy gracious aid and support, that we may succeed in extirpating from our hearts, and from our houses, whatever sins may ordinarily be committed under the shadow of encouraging darkness. To thee, with a sincere heart, we faithfully promise incessantly to keep watch, lest the evening should sow tares in our hearts. That time which thou hast given for the rest and recreation of thy rational creatures, as well as for those which are not gifted with reason, shall never be squandered in luxurious and vain enjoyments—never misapplied in sinful pursuits, lest, too late for beneficial repentance, the morning should wake us to unavailing regret.

Desiring to conform to the wise decrees of our Maker, we will seek to employ the night for recruiting our bodily strength, collecting our thoughts in solemn meditation, and for elevating our hearts to feelings of piety, sacred and sublime. We will devote it to strict self-examination, that we may prepare ourselves in all circumstances to do thy will, to submit with holy resignation to whatever thou mayest ordain, and thus, in some degree, render our spirits worthy of that heaven, to which thou hast taught thy worshippers to aspire.

#### GOD IS EVERY WHERE.

I had the following anecdote from the late worthy Mr. Davis of Hatton Garden, London; whose father had it from one who lived during the plague, and who was well acquainted with the nobleman to whom it refers.

Lord Craven lived in London, when that sad calamity raged. His house was in that part of the town, since called (from the circumstance of Craven House being situated there) Craven Buildings. On the plague growing epidemic, his lordship, to avoid the danger, resolved to go to his seat in the country. His coach and six were accordingly at the door, his baggage put up, and all things in readiness for the journey. As he was walking through the hall, with his hat on, his cane under his arm, and putting on his gloves, in order to step into his carwe shall be saved, the danger will pass from us. I riage, he overheard his negro (who served him as a postillion)

vaying to another servant, "I suppose, by my lord's quitting London to avoid the plague, that his God lives in the country, and not in town." The poor negro said this, in the simplicity of his heart, as really believing a plurality of gods. The speech, however, struck Lord Craven very sensibly; and made him pause. "My God," thought he, "lives everywhere, and can preserve me in town, as well as in the country. I'll even stay where I am. The ignorance of that negro has preached an useful sermon to me. Lord, pardon that unbelief, and that distrust of thy providence, which made me think of running away from thy hand." He immediately ordered his horses to be taken off from the coach, and the luggage to be brought in. He continued at London; was remarkably useful among his sick neighbours; and never caught the infection.

I likewise think it worth preserving, that (as the same person assured my friend Davis's father), the out-pouring of God's spirit was uncommonly great, during the whole time of the plague. Such spiritual consolations, and such rich communion with God, were seldom experienced, as were felt and enjoyed by the Lord's people, from the first commencement to the final cessation of that tremendous visitation. So that the time of destruction was, in another respect, a time of peculiar and most transcendent refreshing to the Church of

Christ.

Top lady.

# MORNING .-- APRIL 25

BOLDLY SEEK THE THRONE OF MERCY.

Where high the heavenly temple stands, The house of God not made with hands, A great High Priest our nature wears, The Guardian of mankind appears.

He who for men their surety stood, And pour'd on earth his precious blood, Pursues in heaven his mighty plan, The Saviour and the Friend of man.

Our fellow-sufferer yet retains A fellow-feeling of our pains; And still remembers in the skies His tears, his agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart, The Man of serrows has a part; He sympathizes with our grief, And to the sufferer sends relief.

With boldness, therefore, at the throne, Let us make all our sorrows known, And ask the aid of heavenly power To help us in the evil hour.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

LET GOD'S WORSHIPPER FEAR NOT. I CHRONICLES, XXII.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God:

8 But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace

and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10 He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

11 Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of

thee

12 Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God.

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed

# DISMAY TO BE REPELLED BY CHRISTIAN COURAGE.

"Thy visitation has preserved my spirit," is a scripture exclamation. Each of us may take it to himself. Under the protection and blessing of the Most High, it has been ours to pass one more night in peace, without accident. We have enjoyed refreshing sleep, and now awake with renewed strength, and fresh courage, cheerfully to greet the new morning, and to enter on the cares of another day. The vital power which we feel within us, the animated gladness which we prove, all come from thee, O Lord! all are the gifts of Almighty love!

The thought shall be dear to our hearts—it is most cheering; unutterable is the joy we experience to know ourselves the objects of special divine love and Providence. How elevating is the feeling which grows on that sense of our own importance, which comes over us when we know ourselves the objects of Divine care, which watches over us while we recline helpless in unconscious sleep, and so wonderfully restores our activity and intelligence with returning light.

Feeling that all in which we rejoice comes to us from the bounty of a gracious Deity, be it our care, with each opening day, to offer to him, the giver of all good, the homage of our praise and unaffected gratitude. To renew and strengthen this happy conviction, must unceasingly be our object. If in moments of weakness doubts intrude upon our minds, if we feel tempted to make it a question, whether or not our prayers are

heard, reason shall soon dismiss those doubts from our bosoms, and our own experience give a decisive answer to the question suggested by the tempter. God knows our sorrows, and listens to our prayers. The circumstances which may disturb our peace, are all open to his observant eye, and under his paternal protection we may feel rationally confident, that we shall conquer every difficulty; for our father who is in heaven will deliver us from evil, and each will be able to say, "of a truth his visitation preserveth my spirit."

This thought shall ever abide with us; it shall revive our courage when despondency would steal over us; it shall enable us to bear up against the cares and toils of life, when they press upon us most severely. The providence which watches over us shall be a lasting source of comfort, and the words of our Redeemer, declaring, that we who are fed by our Heavenly Parent are far better than the fowls of the air, shall not be for-

gotten.

So supported, the trembling soul shall not resign itself to unmanly despair, and render itself undeserving of the favour of God, and the salva-

tion earned for us by Jesus Christ.

Do anxieties still press on the mind? Does the future, that which is believed to be near at hand, as well as that which is far off, cause uneasiness and alarm? Is faith unable to relieve us entirely from annoyance? Be our apprehensions what they may, let us not repine—let us not even be discouraged at this proof of our own weakness, for God has wisely ordained that it should be thus, that we may ever feel our dependance upon him. To know that, under all circumstances, his powerful aid is ever necessary, leads our thoughts to God, and will in the end give us security of mind and holy confidence in the goodness of him who governs the universe, and who arranges all things for the best.

While then we duly feel how feeble we are in ourselves, and look up to him for strength, with all our cares, our bosoms shall remain strangers to that sadness which would overcloud our whole existence, and prove that want of confidence in the Divine bounty, which could not be other than displeasing to God. On him—on him we desire to rely, now, henceforth, and for ever. In all our ways, to thee, O Lord! we desire to commit ourselves. As a Father, we implore thy gracious interference in our behalf. Grant us thy protection, and all that may conduce to our real welfare.

If the Lord, whose visitation preserveth our spiritbe our light and our guide, and our Saviour, of whom shall we be afraid?

#### IMPORTANCE OF GRACE.

Arminians will ask, "Where's the use of preaching the doctrines of grace, even supposing them to be true? since we may go to heaven without a clear knowledge of them." And a man may go to heaven with broken bones; yet it is better to go thither in a whole skin. A man may get to his journey's end, though it rain and thunder all the way; yet it is more comfortable to travel in fair weather. You, or I, might make a better shift to live upon a scanty allowance of bread and water; yet, surely, an easy fortune, and a decent table, are, in themselves, abundantly preferable to poverty and short commons. Who would wish to go upon thorns, when his way may be strewed with roses?

Where is the difference between Arminianism and Epicureism? To suppose a fortuitous concourse of incidents, is no less atheistical, than to suppose a fortuitous concourse of

atoms.

I can compare some ranting, Arminian preachers, who represent salvation as a matter of chance, and press men to help forward their own conversion, upon pain of damnation, to none so well, as to auctioneers; who, with the hammer in their hand, are always bawling out, "Now is your time: now is your time; a-going, a-going, a-going."

Such a method is equally inconsistent with the analogy of faith, and subversive of the majesty of the gospel. Shall I order a dead soul to awake, and raise itself to life? Let me rather address the living God, and say, "Awake, and put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord! Breathe on these slain,

that they may live!"

It is not deemed presumptuous, for the favourites of an earthly king to know and be conscious that they are so; and why should it be deemed presumptuous for the favourites of

God to be assured of his love?

If a merchant of incontestable opulence and honesty gives me his note of hand, binding himself to pay me so much money; I have no reason to fear a failure of payment. "Mr.——is a person of vast wealth, and of as great integrity: my money, therefore, is as sure as if I had it in my pocket." Thus we reason concerning human things.

Give the same implicit credit to God's promises. We have it in his own writing, under his own hand and seal, that "Every one who believeth shall have everlasting life;" and, "Whoso cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out," &c. Do not dishonour God's note of hand, by letting unbelief question either his ability or his veracity. Do not withhold from the God of heaven and earth, that confidence, which, in many cases, you cannot withhold from man.

Toplady.

#### EVENING .-- APRIL 25.

SPEAK AND SING THE SAVIOUR'S PRAISE.

Jesus, I love thy charming name;
'Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud,
That earth and heav'n might hear,

Yes, thou art precious to my soul, My transport, and my trust; Jewels to thee are gaudy toys, And gold is sordid dust.

Ail my capacious pow'rs can wish. In thee most richly meet; Nor to my eyes is light so dear, Nor friendship half so sweet.

O may thy grace still cheer my heart, And shed its fragrance there! The noblest balm of all its wounds. The cordial of its care.

I'll speak the honours of thy name With my last lab'ring breath; When speechless, clasp me in thy arms, My joy in life and death.

Burder's Collection.

#### AVOID USING DECEITFUL SPEECH. JEBEMIAH IX.

2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous

3 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord.

4 Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.

5 And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through de-

ceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

8 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but

in heart he layeth his wait.

9 ¶ Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

SPEECH AN INVALUABLE GIFT, TO BE USED WITH THE UTMOST CARE.

The perverted ingenuity of modern philosophy, has affected to discover that speech was given to man to enable him to conceal his thoughts. Such sophistry must not be admitted by a Christian mind. We are solemnly warned against it in scripture. There we read, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." Can we recal this awful denunciation, breathed by the prophet of the living God, without feeling that, at various periods of our mortal existence, we have

done that for which we ought to feel humbled; for which we have cause for deep lamentation and sickness of heart? Who is he that is so happy as to be able conscientiously to say, I have never abused the gift of speech? Yes, can we, when we solemnly revolve the subject in our minds, doubt that it was given to us for high and important purposes? We may use it to kindle noble sentiments, and generous aspirings in our brethren. We may, by means of it, warn the heedless against the consequences of continuing in their evil ways, and recal the offender from sin. We may use it to teach the ignorant and inexperienced what they owe to the goodness of God, and to proclaim to them and to the world, his greatness and his mercy. It shall be our study to make this valuable faculty an honour to ourselves, and a benefit to others. We will use it to defend the truth, and to diffuse its light, whereever our voices can be heard; to speak comfort to the afflicted heart, and to forward, in all cases. good designs and virtuous ideas.

But as speech is potent for evil as well as for good, we must reflect how fearfully its powers can be misapplied. Never let us forget that it behoves us most carefully to guard against inflicting injury by our words. In us they ought to be found the faithful and sincere interpreters of noble sentiments, of holy convictions, and of purity of thought. Happy shall we feel, most happy, if, as life draws to a close, we can exult in the recollection, that to this end have the powers confided to us been constantly exercised with in-

violable fidelity.

But alas! for the truth! How many reproaches for the abuse of speech do we feel we deserve, if we only cursorily glance on the last few days which we have numbered! If we put to our hearts the question, have we used the precious gift of speech in the cause of wisdom and philanthropy? Have we properly guarded our tongues against uttering evil things? If we ask these searching questions, how many transgressions rise up before conscious memory; transgressions of which we cannot but feel deeply ashamed. Our words have not unfrequently been poisoned arrows; weapons of foul injustice. Cruel insults have issued from our lips, when we have been carried away from propriety by impetuous anger, and when not thus wickedly moved, even in our moments of mirthful enjoyment, the important gift bestowed upon us has often been degraded by unworthy levity, and frivolous exercises which

ought to have been sedulously avoided. By hasty promises we have often ruined ourselves, and damaged others. We have thus, by the abuse of speech, brought ourselves into difficulties, and caused our fellow creatures to experience disappointment and pain. Sometimes, we remember it with shame and regret, we have spoken that which was far from our thoughts; we have reviled where we should have praised; we have praised where we should have reviled. Bitter is the reflection, we have not feared "to call good evil, and evil good."

Speech which might be made a source of comfort to others, as used by us, has caused our brethren to experience unnecessary pain. Bitter mockery, expressions of distrust, and the language of animosity, have occasioned pain to some of those nearest to us, and who were naturally led to seek consolation in adversity, from our sympathy. Even our friends have suffered from harsh words, and disparaging representations; and when these have been spared, coldness and indifference have given what passed from our lips a tone most galling and unbearable.

Why enlarge on the subject! Unhappily the series of offences of this description, with which we feel we may too justly be charged, is of no moderate length. Would that from the memories of the connections we love, they could be obliterated for ever! Oh, that those whom we have mocked, alarmed, or wounded, could consign the offence

to oblivion!

But if that cannot be, let the humiliating recollection from which we cannot relieve ourselves supply a solemn exhortation to watchfulness, for the time to come. From this moment let us resolve to be evermore on our guard, and strive only to use the noble gift of heaven in furtherance of what is right. It ought not to be treated lightly, regarded as a valueless trifle, and wasted in vain frivolities. That important endowment which thou, Oh God! hast given for noble purposes, we desire for the future but to use in a manner worthy of the mighty donor. It shall be applied to utter the dictates of reason, to enforce principles of humanity, and to plead for charity. It shall indicate in us devotion and meekness, and never be allowed to degenerate into the instrument of unruly passion. It shall not be enlisted in the cause of pride and injustice, but, with the aid of our gracious Father, we will endeavour so to command ourselves, that our every word shall tend to his glory, and the well-being or improvement of our fellow mortals.

But most especially we desire, in what remains to us of life, that speech shall by us be used to testify our veneration for the Deity, and our gratitude for his numberless mercies. Thy goodness, O God! shall be daily our joyous theme. Labouring to edify our humbler brethren, we will delight in hymning thy praise. We will use it with all sincerity to confess the errors of our past lives. Effusions of thankfulness shall constantly proclaim thy name to the world, in the hope that, by our exertions, the pious may be confirmed in their faith, the godless recalled to paths of virtue, till all thy children unite with one voice to celebrate the bounty of their eternal Benefactor.

TRUTH AND PURITY INDISPENSABLE TO THE CHRISTIAN.

Consider how unbecoming it is, for a man to live unsuitably to his profession. If we call ourselves Christians, we profess to entertain the doctrine of the gospel; to be taught and instructed by the best master; to be the disciples of the highest and most perfect institution that ever was in the world; to have embraced a religion, which contains the most exact rules for the conduct and government of our lives; which lays down the plainest precepts; sets before us the best patterns and examples of a holy life; and offers us the greatest assistances and encouragements to this purpose. We profess to be furnished with the best arguments, to excite us to holiness and virtue; to be awed with the greatest fears, and animated with the best hopes of any men in the world.

Now whoever makes such a profession as this, obligeth himself to live answerably; to do nothing that shall grossly contradict it. Nothing is more absurd than for a man to act contrary to his profession; to pretend to great matters, and perform nothing of what he pretends to. Wise men will not be caught with pretences, nor be imposed upon with an empty profession; but they will enquire into our lives and actions, and by these they will make a judgment of us. They cannot see into our hearts, nor pry into our understandings, to discover what it is that we inwardly believe; they cannot discern those secret and supernatural principles that we pretend to be acted by: but this they can do, they can examine our actions, and behold our good or bad works, and try whether our lives be indeed answerable to our profession, and do really excel the lives of other men, who do not pretend to such great things. There are a great many sagacious persons, who will easily find us out; will look under our mask, and see through all our fine pretensions, and will quickly discern the absurdity of telling the world that we believe one thing, when we do the

# MORNING.—APRIL 26

THE RECORDED WORKS OF GOD

Let children hear the mighty deeds
Which God perform'd of old;
Which in our younger years we saw
And which our fathers told.

He bids us make his glories known;
His works of pow'r and grace;
And we'll convey his wonders down,
Through ev'ry rising race.

Our lips shall tell them to our sons, And they again to theirs; That generations yet unborn May teach them to their heirs.

Thus shall they learn in God alone
Their hope securely stands:
That they may no er forget his works,
But practise his commands.

Watts.

GOD WILL VINDICATE HIS NAME, AND PUT DOWN THE WICKED. PSALM LXXV.

1 Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

2 When I shall receive the congregation I will judge up-

rightly.

3 The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Selah.

4 I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly; and to the

wicked, Lift not up the horn:

5 Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.

6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.

7 But God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth

up another.

8 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine

8 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.

9 But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God

of Jacob.

THE DIGNITY CONFERRED UPON MAN BY THE CREATOR TO BE CONSTANTLY BORNE IN MIND.

Let those who are doubtful of the high destiny of man, remember what the scripture tells us of his original creation. There we read, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Oh that this were constantly borne in mind! Would that the consciousness of that dignity which God has bestowed upon us, by giving us his own form, and endowing us with reason and free-will, might always be present to our souls. It assuredly must prove a strong incentive to virtue. It would supply the strongest possible impulse that could move us to strive after perfection. The faculty of subduing wild desires, and the power of denying ourselves sinful pleasures, is that which we ought to cultivate with care, in order to banish from our bosoms evil thoughts. At this we must constantly aim, and if, with the blessing of God, we succeed, then will our lives be of the spirit; our hearts will be piously devoted to the Lord, and in our future progress, we shall never experience the bitterness of repentance or the anguish of remorse.

But let us not conceal from ourselves the mournful fact, that we are still far from that point which, ere this, we ought to have reached. dignity of the Christian we cannot flatter ourselves we have as yet attained. While reason and religion join to bid us advance, we frequently pause in the road which leads to wisdom and to holiness. Nay, sometimes we have the affliction to find that we have receded from the path we ought to have pursued. We stand aloof, and are lukewarm, when our souls ought to unite with zeal to sing the praises of our God. Let devoted love, and unfailing faith in the Redeemer of the world, through whose atoning blood we are so immensely raised in the scale of creation, fill our grateful hearts! To him we owe it that we can look up to our Creator for mercy with confident expectation, and with a lively hope, that, in a future state, it will be ours to know the blessedness of heaven. What will be our felicity then, when we have gained the rich possession which Jesus died to secure for us? In heaven only can we feel all we owe to him, who, by purchasing remission of our sins, gave us a title to eternal life and immortal joy.

With grief, with pain, and confusion, we acknowledge that, by our own misconduct, the divine light which is within us frequently becomes obscured. Too seldom are our actions prompted and regulated by the spirit; too rarely are our actions governed by virtuous discretion, while often we have unhappily been carried away by ungovernable passion, which we wanted virtue to

conquer or to regulate.

As we glance back on the checquered past, we have the misery to discover that, in numberless instances, we have sinned against him who condescended to create us in his own image. Acting thus, we have brought upon ourselves a load of cares which we might have avoided, and many hours of sadness which might have been unknown. We have sacrificed our own peace, and interfered with that of our friends and brethren. Comfort that might have been ours, has been blighted and cast away, and we have forfeited the grace of God.

But, enlightened by mournful experience, we will no longer continue in the course which has already caused us to experience much suffering,

and which will eventually conduct us to everlasting perdition. For the time which remains to us, we will bear in mind what is due to ourselves—what we owe to the dignity conferred upon us by God—that of being men and Christians. We will render ourselves worthy of a distinction so glorious; and, born to be children of light, all our aspirings shall be worthy of those to whom a

glorious destiny has been assigned.

To the worldly eye this may appear difficult, nay, impossible. Conscious of our own insignificance, as compared with thy Majesty, What are we, O God! we exclaim, that we should dare to lift our thoughts up to thee; that thou, whom all the angels join to honour with hymns of immortal glory, shouldst deign to listen to our feeble efforts to honour thy name. Dust and ashes as we are, how can we reflect on thy bounty without feeling our own unworthiness. What, O Lord! are we, that we should receive so much at thy hands? When we look into ourselves, we can discover nothing to entitle us to such high consideration. Thy power is visible in our actions, in all our thoughts, from the first moment of our existence up to this day—in the thoughts which accuse, as well as in those which tend to exculpate, and in all those feelings which prompt us to praise thy name. What is man that thou so re-Thou hast protected us in our gardest him? weakness from infancy; what year has ever passed without affording us numerous evidences of thy fatherly love? To thee we owe our health and strength; our capacity to meet suffering with fortitude; and above all, from thee we have received a knowledge of the truths of Christianity. Without that, all else had been insufficient for our comfort and support.

And possessing this knowledge, we also know that, to the mind that covets to commune with thee, nothing is impossible. Assisted by thy blessed spirit, Great God! we may succeed in gaining a greater moral elevation. To thee, then, we desire to resign ourselves, in the hope that we shall be enabled to subject all our wishes and our understandings to the commandment of the spirit. and the precepts of the gospel. Thus shall we become reasonable beings, and thus shall we gain freedom from the pernicious and degrading voke of wicked passions, and from the corrupting lusts of the flesh. Honestly and sincerely resolved to fight under thy banner, O Lord! we claim thy aid—the aid of a gracious Parent in the struggle. Guided by the light of truth, strengthened by

faith, we shall overcome the world. Thus favoured, whether we live or die, as men and as Christians, we hope worthily to act our part, and in all circumstances to be found faithful to duty.

THE MAJESTY OF GOD SEEN IN THE WORKS OF NATURE.

We sit down, in the lodge "of the wayfaring man, in the wilderness," and we feel, that all we witness, is the emblem of our own fate. Such, also, in a few years, will be our own condition. The blossoms of our spring, the pride of our summer, will also fade into decay, and the pulse that now beats high with virtuous, or with vicious desire, will gradually sink, and then-must stop-for ever. We rise from our meditations, with hearts softened and subdued, and we return into life, as into a shadowy scene, where we have "disquieted ourselves in vain." Such is the first impression, which the present scene of nature, is fitted to make upon us. It is this first impression, which intimidates the thoughtless, and the gay; and indeed, if there were no other reflections, that followed, I know not that it would be the business of wisdom, to recommend such meditations. It is the consequences, however, of such previous thoughts, which are chiefly valuable; and among these, there are two, which may well deserve our consideration. It is the unvarying character of nature, amid all its scenes, to lead us at last to its Author; and it is for this final end, that all its varieties have such dominion over our minds. We are led by the appearance of spring, to see his bounty; we are led by the splendours of summer, to see his greatness. In the present hours we are led to a higher sentiment; and, what is most remarkable, the very circumstances of melancholy are those which guide us most securely, to put our trust in him. We are witnessing the decay of the year; we go back in imagination, and find that such, in every generation, has been the fate of man. We look forward, and we see, that to such ends all must come at last: we lift our desponding eyes in search of comfort, and we see above us one, who "is ever the same, and to whose years there is no end." Amid the vicissitudes of nature, we discover that central Majesty, "in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." We feel that there is a God; and from the tempestuous sea of life, we hail that polar star of nature, to which a sacred instinct had directed our eyes, and which burns with undecaying ray, to lighten us among all the darkness of the deep.

Let the busy and active go out, and pause for a time, amid the scenes which surround them, and learn the high lesson, which nature teaches in the hours of its fall. They are now ardent with all the desires of mortality; and fame, and interest, and pleasure, are displaying to them their shadowy promises. Let them withdraw themselves for a time from the agitations of the world; let them mark the desolation of summer, and listen to the winds of winter, which begin to murmur above their heads. It is a scene which, with all its powers, has yet no reproach; it tells them, that such is also the fate to which they must come; that the pulse of passion must one day beat low; that the illusions of time must pass; and "that the spirit must return to him who gave it."

Alison.

## EVENING.-APRIL 26.

ALL THE OBJECTS OF NATURE, AS WELL AS THE FEELINGS OF MAN, PROVE THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

> O thou, to whom all creatures bow Within this earthly frame. Through all the world how great art thou! How glorious is thy name!

When heav'n, thy beauteous work on high, Employs my wond'ring sight; The moon that nightly rules the sky, With stars of feebler light.

What's man (say I), that, Lord, thou lov'st To keep him in thy mind? Or what his offspring, that thou prov'st To them so wondrous kind?

Him next in pow'r thou didst create To thy celestial train; Ordain'd with dignity and state, O'er all thy works to reign.

O thou, to whom all creatures bow Within this earthly frame, Through all the world how great art thou! How glorious is thy name!

Drummond's Selection.

#### ALL SHALL BE SAVED BY FAITH GALATIANS III

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ve should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now

made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the

promise of the Spirit through faith.

#### ALL CREATION PROVES THE EXISTENCE OF A GOD.

Widely as men differ on almost every subject that can engage their attention, all rational beings concur in owning, that wherever they turn their eves, abundant proofs are afforded of the existence of a God. It has been remarked, "The fool says in his heart there is no God." Weak indeed must be be who could seriously allow such a thought to possess his mind. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge; and therefore, let all the inhabitants of the earth praise his greatness and his majesty, while they confess, with grief and penitence, that they have forgotten the Lord. Having thus erred, they must be forsaken by reason and common sense, if they repeat the greatest falsehood that can be fashioned by a human tongue! the greatest folly that can be devised by fools, and say, "There is no God." Can such abject weakness be imagined? Where is the desert corner in the universe, where the forgotten spot in the sky above, or where the neglected chasm in the globe on which we move, that does not bear the impress of the seal, the indication of the power, and the glory of an Almighty and intelligent Ruler of the universe?

As the night draws near, the hum of human voices around is gradually hushed into silence, but still louder than at noon-day to the ear of the contemplative mind sounds the hymn of the Heavenly Host. Though mortals should be mute -were every human tongue silent in the Almighty's praise, the smallest star visible to us would suffice to proclaim, through all creation, as a herald, the greatness of our God. While we gaze with gratified amazement on his wondrous works, we are assured that "The Lord is God, and there is no God beside him," and the heart feels moved to exclaim, "Eternal, immeasurable Omnipotent is his name. Compared with thee, what is man? His life is but as a moment, and thy upholding hand withdrawn, he is nothing."

Yet mean as man unquestionably is, compared

with his august Creator, he is of more importance than all the stars and suns that shine for ever in the heaven above. We are intelligent beings—we are destined for immortality. When the stars shall be extinguished, and all the most gigantic works of nature's hand are crumbled into dust, when palaces, cathedrals, and columns, in honour of heroic deeds, shall all have passed away, and been forgotten, with those who caused them to rise, even in the wreck of a world, the undying soul of man will survive. We shall continue to exist, and stand before the eternal throne.

Source of all good! all perfect Being, who canst know no change, we feel that man can only derive importance from the knowledge he gains of thee, and from the disposition he proves to conform to thy will. Oh, that we could better understand thy ways, and feel more assured that we have fulfilled our duty! May the living God fortify our hearts in truth, and enable us to repel all the assaults of infidelity, being reconciled to the everlasting Deity, by the sufferings and the transcendant merits of him who gave himself up for man's redemption. We know and feel that we are thine, and that eternity will be ours. From this belief we will never part; in this conviction we live, and in this, with thy blessing and comforting support, we will die. To thee our prayers ascend, in the confident hope that thou wilt not reject them, and that, in the plenitude of thy mercy, thou wilt pardon our trespasses. Bending before thy judgment-seat, with a contrite heart, our filial obedience will not be disregarded by our gracious parent. Distant from us be the idle vanities of life. Let the foolish trifler boast of what he can consume, or of the gorgeous attire in which he may array his person. Let the proud exultingly think themselves great, because they are able to make humbler fellow-creatures tremble at their angry glance, forgetful that if they can oppress their brethren, the unhappy are equally free with them to appeal to God. The presuming arrogance which would fain govern the sun, ascend to the stars, alter the course of the moon, or pierce the centre of the earth, is taught to feel his own weakness and thy might; confined by thy decree to the globe which he inhabits, till thy resistless arm snatches him from its surface, and numbers him among things that were. Great and only God-source of all life and power, thy humble worshippers devoutly adore thee in the dust, and doing so, exalt themserves. Strange is the difference we feel while

contemplating the Creator, and while addressing our fellow creatures. Exalting men we seem to diminish in the presence of those we seek to honour; but bending to offer our heartfelt homage to the Lord of all, our hearts swell within our bosoms like buds in the spring. In our humility we feel lifted above all earthly cares. Anxiety can no longer find bosom room. Though but a breath, as we belong to the great Creator, we cannot pass away, and may therefore exult in all the importance of a glorious immortality.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS THAT WE ARE THE WORK OF GOD'S HAND, WILL SUSTAIN THE DYING SUFFERER.

On the very last evening of her execution, Lady Jane Grey was absorbed in the perusual of a Greek testament, and she wrote a letter, in which the piety and fortitude of the writer are placed in the most conspicuous light.

It is seldom that even those of the stronger sex, in the vigour of life, and already schooled in the lessons of experience, have exhibited such heroic conduct as the subject of this memoir. But the purity of her soul, and the genuine goodness of her heart, were powerful supports on this trying occasion. A life of innocence forms the best consolation in the hour of calamity, and death loses its terrors when contemplated with the calmness of conscious virtue.

Indeed, so tranquil in soul was Lady Jane on the eve of her departure from this life—so collected were all the faculties of her mind, that she is said to have devoted part of the evening to the correction of a prayer which she had composed, and which had been her comfort during the tedious hours of imprisonment. This composition is of undoubted authenticity, and we cannot refrain from presenting a portion of it to our readers:—

"O Lord! thou God and father of my life—of me, a poor and desolate woman, which flyeth unto thee only in all troubles and miseries—thou, O Lord! art the only defender and deliverer of those that put their trust in thee; and therefore I, being defiled with sin, encumbered with affliction, unquieted with troubles, wrapped in cares, overwhelmed with miseries, vexed with temptations, and grievously tormented with the long imprisonment of this vile mass of clay, my sinful body, do come unto thee (O merciful Saviour!) craving thy mercy and help, without the which so little hope of deliverance is left, that I may utterly despair of my liberty.

O merciful God! consider my misery, best known unto thee; and be thou unto me a strong tower of defence, I humbly require thee. Suffer me not to be tempted above my power, but either be thou a deliverer unto me out of this great misery, or else give me great grace patiently to bear thy heavy hand and sharp correction. \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* I am thy workmanship, created in Christ Jesus; give me grace, therefore, to tarry thy leisure, and patiently to bear thy works, assuredly knowing, that as thou canst, so thou

grace, therefore, to tarry thy leisure, and patiently to bear thy works, assuredly knowing, that as thou canst, so thou wilt deliver me, when it shall please thee; nothing doubting or mistrusting thy goodness towards me; for thou knowest better what is good for me than I do; therefore, do with me in all things what thou wilt. Only, in the mean time, arm me, I beseech thee, with thy armour, that I may stand fast, my loins being girded about with verity. \* \* \* Hear me, O merciful Father! for his sake, whom thou wouldest should be a sacrifice for my sins; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory. Amen!"

Life of Lady Jane Grey.

# MORNING .-- APRIL 27.

PRAYER OF SURPASSING IMPORTANCE.

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, Unutter'd or exprest; The motion of a hidden fire, That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death,—
He enters heaven by prayer.

Montgomery.

#### GOD WILL PUNISH TREACHERY. MALACHI, II.

10 Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

11 ¶ Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

12 The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and

him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts.

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

14 ¶ Yet ye say, Wherefore? because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and

the wife of thy covenant.

15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16 For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

PERSEVERE AND PRAY ALWAYS.

There are men who profess reverence for sacred things, who say they are perplexed, and because doubts come across their minds, seem to think all inquiry, all further reflection, unnecessary or useless. They are unwise ;-" Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth," we are told in scripture; and ought we, where the object looked for is of such vast, such inexpressible importance, be utterly discouraged, because our first search or inquiry has not proved successful? Many times we have sought without finding, and asked from our Heavenly Father that which has not been given. The denial, or rather the delay, has discouraged us; our hearts have fainted, and despondency has come over us. But reason teaches that this must not be. We should not sink in weak dismay, if we are not at once triumphant. The Christian is forbidden to despond because his prayer is not instantly granted. He ought still to feel confident that it is not unheard, and satisfied that God will not refuse needful aid to his feeble children. We must look up to him to enlighten our minds, that we may understand and adore his wisdom, and humbly submit to his dispensations, however heavily at the moment they may be felt. We must bear in mind that we are not told in scripture that we shall receive whatever we ask; but simply that each who asks shall receive. Then let memory be appealed to, and we shall feel ourselves constrained to admit that something we have received in reply to our appeals for aid from above. If we are careful to bear that in mind, we shall find within ourselves that "peace which passeth all understanding," and be protected and fortified against distressing doubts, in the moments when we cannot find what we most anxiously seek, and when our petitions to the throne of grace seem to have been breathed in vain.

Weak and blind as we are, it is impossible that we can receive from our bountiful Parent exactly what we desire. All wise and all good as he is, he knows, far better than we do ourselves, what we really want. His love is evinced even in his refusals; and, withholding what we crave, he often gives that which is of infinitely more value than any thing we have asked.

Careful as we may be not to solicit from our Maker any thing but that which we feel thoroughly assured must tend to our happiness, we cannot

be sure that our wisdom is sufficient, in all instances, to direct us aright. We are but human, and must bow to that superior intelligence which we know to be divine. We, grovelling and earth-born as we are, weakly covet terrestrial goods, and the enjoyments of the world. Infinite Wisdom, denying us the gaudy and deluding objects for which we sigh, reserves to itself to bestow on the humble supplicant higher benefits and nobler gifts, than, with our contracted views and low desires, it would have occurred to us to ask.

The mighty Arbiter of our destiny even here commences the great work of ennobling his creatures, and turns our thoughts from things which are in their nature perishable, to those which possess immortal value. He teaches our minds to disengage themselves from what is earthly, to fix their yearnings on heavenly objects. We can only, of ourselves, ask for health, long life. worldly honours, the preservation of those who are dear to us, and for glittering treasures. which the moth will corrupt, and the rust corrode. These it may be the pleasure of the Almighty Disposer of events to withhold, and to give us, in their stead, wise thoughts, holy purposes, and a pure and faithful love; comforting hopes here, and a lively faith, which assures us of happiness in the world to come.

Exalted as thou art, above all, even above the archangels who hymn thy praise,--still thy bounty, O God! is, in this world, every where manifested. It extends to the smallest of thy creatures—to the worm in the dust, as clearly as to the seraph who stands by thy throne. Oh, Thou! whose finger indicates to revolving suns the points at which they are to shine, be eternal honour thine, for also guiding mankind in the path which they should follow! King of all kings! how vastly does thy might and thy benevolence surpass that of the great of this earth! They frequently refuse the supplications of their subjects. Impotent to relieve, the petition is rejected. Not such thy course. Of the millions that solicit thy indulgent care, none remain un-Abounding goodness provides for all that which is best fitted for their peculiar condition. Humbly we thank thee, for that thou art graciously pleased to listen to the prayers which the meanest of thy devout worshippers address to thy ear, and most especially that we are permitted to consider ourselves among those who are entitled to submit their wishes to their

Eternal Father, with cheerful confidence and pious hope. He bestows on those who solicit him those things which are for their good, and those only. That which is better for us than what we ask, can only be granted by denying to us the inferior blessing. This shall be our conviction, when we do not receive aught that we have presumed to ask. Never let us be deterred from presenting, with pious anxiety, our petitions to the throne of grace. We will not cease to implore God's goodness, and will reverentially bow before his throne; never will we desist from earnest supplication, but steadfastly persevering, our thought shall be, that the supplicant who asks in holy confidence, must eventually receive more than he has presumed to claim from the bounty of our God and Father.

#### DO ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

Our walking with God, includes our esteeming and intending him as the ultimate end and felicity of our souls. He is not to be sought, or loved, or conversed with, as a means to any greater good, (for there is no greater) nor as inferior, or merely equal to any. His goodness must be the most powerful attractive of our love: his favour must be valued as our happiness; and the pleasing of him must be our most industrious employment. To walk with him, is to live in the warming, reviving sunshine of his goodness, and to feel a delighting, satisfying virtue in his love and gracious presence. To live as those that are not their own, and that have their lives and faculties, and provisions, and helps for their master's service: as a horse or dog is of so much worth, as he is of use to him that owneth him; and that is the best that is the most serviceable to his master: yet with this very great difference, that man being a more noble and capacious creature, is admitted not only into a state of service, but of sonship, and friendship, and communion with God: and is allowed and appointed to share more in the pleasure and fruits of his services, and to put in his own felicity and delight into his end; not only because self-love is natural and necessary to the creature, but also because he is under the promise of a reward; and (more than either) because he is a lover, and not only a servant, and his work is principally a work of love, and therefore his end is the end of a lover, which is mutual complacency in the exercises of love.

He that seeketh not first the kingdom and righteousness of God, and referreth not other things to him, but seeks first the creature, and God only for it, doth but deny God in his heart, and basely subject him to the works of his own hands, and doth not walk with God, but vilify and reject him. If you live not to God, even to obey, and please, and honour him, you do not walk with him, but walk contrary to him, (by living to his enemies, the flesh, the world, and the devil) and therefore God will "walk contrary to you." You were both created and redeemed, though for your own felicity, yet principally for the glory and pleasure of your Creator and Redeemer; and for no felicity of your own, but what consisteth in pleasing him, glorifying him, and enjoying him: "Whether therefore we eat or drink, or whatever we do, it should all be done to the glory of God."

Buter

# EVENING .-- APRIL 27.

#### PRAISE TO THE HOLY ONE.

Ye holy angels bright,
Which stand before God's throne,
And dwell in glorious light,
Praise ye the Lord each one.
You there so nigh
Are much more meet
Than we the feet,
For things so high.

You blessed souls at rest,
That see your Saviour's face,
Whose glory, even the least,
Is far above our grace;
God's praises sound,
As in his sight,
With sweet delight
You do abound.

All nations of the earth,
Extol the world's great King;
With melody and mirth,
His glorious praises sing.
For he still reigns,
And will bring low,
The proudest foe,
That him disdains.

Baxter .

# REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE GRANTED TO THE GENTILES. ACTS. XI.

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

5 I was in the city of Joppa, praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn

up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already

come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we

entered into the man's house.

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy

house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

# HAPPY AND CONTINUAL PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Though the mission of the Saviour was, in the first instance, to the Jews, not to them was it intended that the blessed effects of his mission should be confined. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring," Christ himself says. The Christian, however, of to-day, has to regret that there are, even now, on earth, many millions who have not yet received the cheering light of the gospel, but who still are plunged in the depths of the most gloomy superstition. Ought not this to be the subject of bitter tears and ceaseless regret? No; these must be unavailing, and may well be spared. Even the light of the sun requires some time to approach our planet; and was it fitting, that Christ should enlighten the world with the stormy violence of a tempest? Deep and profound is the darkness which in many places remains to be conquered, and it was his pleasure only to subdue it by gradual advances. If Christianity were forced on the nations too rapidly, the over-excited zeal of its advocates might soon cool, and its foes would ascribe the sudden spread of religion to any thing but its true cause, its own excellence; while, comparatively speaking, the mournful errors of Paganism would be little known, and but imperfectly exposed.

But if the faith which is ours is not poured with lightning-like rapidity on the earth; let it not for a moment be supposed, that in its onward march any pause has been witnessed. It does not stand still. The Christian and the Anti-christian are led to reflect on the serious truths in the gospel, and year after year, places before our admiring eyes unquestionable proofs of the growing greatness of the kingdom of Christ.

Let the scoffers who are disposed to mock what we proclaim the triumph of sacred truth, tell us, now, what argument their sophistry can advance, what fact they can produce, in opposition to what we maintain. Can they name to

us a single nation which has gone back to Paganism? Neither the magnificence nor the licentiousness which attended the worship of the gods of Greece and Rome, have been able to wrest a single people from the powerful grasp of Jesus. On the other hand, how enormously has the empire of Paganism been reduced! Where, but a century ago, idolatry and beasts of prey covered the land.

"And beasts with men divided empire claimed,"

the followers of Christ are now seen proceeding to their new churches; where cannibals were sitting in darkness, in the shadow of death, light has been diffused, and blessings on blessings resulting from it, have been universally confessed to be the happy consequence of the advent of Christianity. If in some parts of the world, the first attempts to convert the heathen have not been altogether prosperous, and converts have relapsed into darkness, still the truth continues to strive against error, and will eventually gain the victory. Already would its conquests have been greater than they appear, had not some of its Its interests champions proved faithless. have been badly advocated; and greedy, ambitious, and superstitious priests have usurped the place of the apostles, without feeling any desire to tread in their footsteps. By sordid and immoral merchants and sailors, the Christian ethics are frequently abused, and, in consequence, they have been viewed with suspicion and disgust by those who might otherwise have embraced our faith. Yet the doctrine of Christ, though thus dishonoured, has still made progress. It was so received in China and Japan, that the princes and priests there interested in upholding the ancient idolatry, had a hard battle to fight, and were obliged to muster all their forces to resist the advance of Christianity, and drive it from their shores.

It is a cheering thought for those who mourn the neglect of religion in more favoured regions, who witness the attempts made to undermine it, and bring it into contempt in many European states, to know that, as the gloom of night is followed by the bright day, so the night of Paganism has been succeeded by the glorious morning of Christianity. In the peninsula of Judea, the church of Jesus Christ is daily gaining ground, and many thousands of souls by its influence are annually brought into the road which leads to everlasting felicity.

Holy and honoured instruments—ambassadors of universal peace—worthy ministers of religion, engaged in spreading the blessings of divine knowledge in distant lands,—honour to your objects, and success to your glorious labours! Blessings for ever rest on your memory, Schwarz and Morrison! May strength from above descend on the noble and pure-minded Gutzlaff! May additional triumphs mark the efforts of the societies for sending out missionaries, and promulgating a knowledge of the scriptures. Gloriously preparing the way for the progress of holy truth among the nations of the earth, your exertions deserve the applause of men, and the blessing of God will attend them

#### A RENEWED HEART NECESSARY.

It is not a fair outside, a slight performance, a bare work done, that is accepted by God : if it were, Cain would deserve as much thanks for his sacrifice as his brother Abel; for in the outside of them there was no difference, unless perhaps on Cain's side, that he was forwardest in the duty, and offered first. But it is the inside of the action, the marrow and bowels of it, that God judges by. If a sum in gross, or a bag sealed up, would pass for payment in God's audit, every man would come and make his accounts duly enough with him; and what he wanted in gold for his payment should be made up in counters. But God goes more exactly to work, when he comes to call thee to an account of thy stewardship: he is a "God of thoughts," and a "searcher of the heart and reins;" and it will then be a harder business to be found just when he examines, or "clear when he will judge." The least spot and blemish in the face of it, the least maim or imperfection in the offering, the least negligence or coldness in the performance, nay, the least corruption in the heart of him that doth it, hath utterly spoiled the sacrifice. Be the bulk and skin of the work never so large and beautiful to the eye, if it come not from a sanctified, renewed, gracious heart, it will find no acceptance, but that in the prophet, "Who hath required it at your hands?" This is not that God is taken with, or such as he commanded: it may pass for a compliment, or a work of course, but never be valued as a duty or real service. Resolve thyself to dwell nowhere but in the church, and there (like Simeon Stilites, in Eusebius) plant thyself continually in a pillar, with thy eyes and words fixed, and shot up perpetually towards heaven. If there be not a spirit within thee to give light to the eyes, to add sighs and groans to the voice, all this that thou hast done is nothing but as a blind man's pretensions to sight, and a dumb man's claim to speech; and so in like manner in all our duties, which the world and carnal men set a price on; and the reason is, because every spiritual-seeming work done by a natural man, is not truly so: it is nothing less than that which it is said to be. His prayers are not prayers-liplabour perhaps, but not devotion; his serving of God is formality, not obedience; his hope of heaven, not a hope, but a fancy.

Dr. Hammond.

## MORNING.—APRIL 28.

#### OUR END IS NEAR

"Our end is near"-so moaned forth the trees, As they trembling, bowed to the gusty breeze: And their sere leaves scattered before the blast. In wild eddies over the valleys pass'd: " Many a storm hath howled o'er our head, Yet we've boldly weathered the tempest dread; But our day is o'er-and the solemn swell Of the blustering wind is our funeral knell."

"Our end is near," sighed the withering flowers, As they, drooping, hung from the fragrant bowers: "Once we were dazzling in beauty and bloom, And shedding around a grateful perfume; But our fleeting glory and lustre are past, And our fragrance sweet is breathing its last, Take warning, ye young, at life's joyous shrine, For, like us, your beauty must soon decline."

"Our end is near," buzzed the countless swarm Of insects bearing each colour and form, That blithely danced in the sun's bright rays, And merrily passed their few short days: "These spangled wings will glitter no more; Our airy gambols will ere long be o'er. And thousands more will skim through the air, And it will not be known that once we were."

"Our end is near" - Mortals, this lesson know, That all things are finite here below: That we, too, like trees and flowers must decay, And from earthly scenes will soon pass away. But if death here visits each age and grade, Let us think of the land where nought shall fade; And strive to attain that happy shore, Where the flowers shall wither and droop no more.

Anon

#### GOD WILL AID THE POOR AND THE AFFLICTED. PSALM CIX.

21 But do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

22 For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded

23 I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. 24 My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh

faileth of fatness. 25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked

upon me they shaked their heads. 26 Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy

27 That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou,

Lord, hast done it. 28 Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

29 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

30 I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

31 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S COMFORT.

Is there any plan or purpose unfolding 'neath the sun? Or whither does the earth through her spiral orbit run? Are suns, and stars, and nations moved by one pervading soul? Should we see a mighty meaning could we comprehend the

"Come with me," said a spirit, unfolding glorious wings-The sunlight, from their plumage, a dazzling radiance flings-"And in meridian circles round the earth-ball let us fly, And note its changing pictures as they flash along the sky."

Away! the ocean-billows soon hush their loudest roar To a gentle plash and ripple as in the heavens we soar: All round you rocky island behold the sparkling foam, And the yellow belt of sand—in you island is my home!

But where are all the murmurs of the ever-toiling throng? On lines of iron rush the smoking trains along: In silence through the fields, by the crowded towns they fly-How little they disturb the silence of the sky!

Amid the bright green pastures the dark brown city stands-Where are all its muttering voices, aching heads, and busy

Oh, men of cares, whose bosoms, as in a prison, swell. Look with us from the heavens-there is room wherein to dwell!

In the north, amid the mountains, behold the rivers shine-That winding silver thread, the Wear; that broader thread, the Tyne:

But why have all the thousands left the roads and fields around?

They are toiling mid the beds of coal in chasms underground.

Upon you rocky island live the millions of the free, Behold their white-sailed vessels upon the emerald sea; Oh, messengers so beautiful Heaven speed you on your way

To many a crowded harbour and solitary bay!

Away! behold the Pyrenees! down sloping to the plain. Where fought the Goth and Saracen for old romantic Spain; Away! but, poised a moment o'er the midland sea, behold Athenian columns, Roman domes, and Stamboul's glittering

Few moments since, we heard, on yonder Christian ground, From many a grey cathedral's quire the loud Te Deum sound; Now, where the minarets pierce the blue-Constantinople's

"There is no God but Allah!" hark! the Muezzins reply.

With war drum, hung around with skulls, 'mid Afric pa-

With all his swarthy bands goes forth the King of Ashantee; It is the Sabbath-day, so still in yonder Christian lands! To fight the negro tribes move on-black spots upon the sands!

Away! o'er Babel Mandel's Straits, and past the Persian shore.

See, the fakir musing sits on a mountain in Mysore: In dreams the people seem to move beneath the glowing sun: Where is all their glory? Faded. Where is all their history? Done.

"Lift up your hearts to heaven!" you Christian preachers cry; The Chinese in their fields their daily labours ply— On streets, canals, and rivers they seek for pelf and pay; The busy, yellow millions, who keep no holy day!

Oh, spirit! these are wondrous scenes for dwellers in the

A changeful picture rolls the earth before the angels' eyes; But deeper thoughts are wakening up within my human soul— Can you tell to me the *meaning*, the purpose of the whole?

Is there any smile of prophecy upon the world's wide face?

Among the striving millions there, say who shall win the race?

Mid fallen towers, and falling thrones, and glories that decay, Will any kingdom rise to shine in everlasting day?

"One Spirit pours his riches o'er all the earth abroad, And all these changing pictures show the glory of our God. But, would you know the meaning and the virtue of the whole.

Descend to yonder vale, where dwells one happy, human soul.

"There sitting, in the sunshine, the grey-haired labourer see; He smiles upon his grandson there, who plays beside the tree; Where, when a child, he played himself; and soon its boughs shall wave,

When he rests from all his labours, above his quiet grave!

"Oh, yes! there is a meaning and a rest for every heart, Not in gazing on the whole, but in doing well a part; Where rests in peace and thankfulness one reasonable soul— There centres all the happiness, the wisdom of the whole."

Christian Magazine.

GOD COMFORTS AND RAISES UP THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM.

The wisdom of the Deity, as manifested in the beauty and harmony of his works, command our admiration. Truly is it said in scripture, "The Lord is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Of this have not we ourselves had frequent and joyous experience? Not only have we admired the various objects placed before our eyes in a smiling landscape, but with equal amazement and delight, we have recognized the monument of his powerful hand in finding circumstances so ordered, that a day of joy has opened upon us when we looked for one of anxiety and sorrow. Hope and happiness have been ours where we despondingly expected pain and tribulation. The favourable turn given in some in-

stances to our affairs, has brought to us exultation for grief, victory where we expected defeat, and peace where we were threatened with the evils of protracted war. These changes have been graciously operated in our favour, and our hearts, long depressed by dreary apprehension, have learned to glow with unexpected satisfaction.

But it cannot be denied that, when thus favoured, shame has frequently come over us, from recollection of the culpable pusillanimity with which we had too readily given up our fainting and terrified hearts to something verging on despair. In worldly matters our souls are often too provident. They refuse to "take no thought of to-morrow," and hesitating to put their trust in God, prove themselves wanting in hope, and deficient in confidence. How often, yielding to foolish dismay, have we been shamed by the counsels and admirable working of the Lord!

And why have we thus brought confusion upon ourselves? Let not the truth be concealed; because we unhappily knew that we had failed in our That melancholy consciousness it was, which disposed us rather to nourish tormenting cares, than to rest at ease; to indulge fear rather than to cherish hope. Had we pursued with unwearied zeal the course marked out for us; had we repelled the tempter with virtuous firmness. and disdained to suffer ourselves to be carried away by the vain allurements of the world, and not wasted our time and strength in vain pursuits, the end of which was but folly, we should never have found ourselves in a state so pitiable. Our griefs have been of our own creation. We have not felt wretched from possessing too little, but in consequence of our desiring too much; and because we attached too much importance to the realization of our wishes, puerile and irrational as we now know them to have been.

No more, O Lord! suffer us to be thus fearfully misled. Let not thy assistance be implored in vain. We desire to remember how often we have been rejoiced and soothed by the influence of thy Holy Spirit and paternal love, when we have called upon thee from the depths of mental gloom, labouring under the depressing conviction that we were unworthy of thy care! Thou hast filled the troubled breast with holy peace; and if such thy pleasure heretofore, may we not look forward to the future with hope, when we call upon thee with earnestness and love, to govern us by thy good spirit, and to protect us with thy mighty shield.

While we pray for thy mercy and thy aid, Oh Lord! it is not for our own welfare alone, that we solicit. If not too presumptuous the thought, we would also entreat thee for our fellow creatures, and especially for our brethren, who now languish in grief and mourning. From many who address to thee their prayers this day, the tear of bitter anguish has fallen. Many are in deep affliction; poor, friendless, exposed to fearful temptations, labouring under sickness, or panting on the bed of death. Cheer them, O God! with thy soothing influence. Have pity upon all who are plunged in sadness. Hear with condescending compassion the petitions of thy children, whether silently breathed in solitude, or uttered in a place of worship, and so answer them, that at the close of the day, they may thankfully exult in the blessed experience which it has brought, and each feel justified in exclaiming, "Blessed be the Lord my God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor withdrawn his mercy from me."

For ourselves we desire to bend with all humility before thy footstool, and penitentially confess our past transgressions, and our manifold errors. Cast us not away. Avert not thy face from us, gracious Lord, while we now promise for the future to endeavour, with all the ardour of sincere faith, to improve upon the past, and to avoid a repetition of the errors into which we have unhappily been betrayed. Moderating our wishes in regard to earthly goods, in thee our hopes shall be strengthened. We will firmly and undoubtingly believe that thou art love, and that thy great designs with respect to man, all tend to

promote his eternal welfare.

Should we, as we advance on our journey, again be overtaken by sloth, by yearnings for worldly pleasures, or by reprehensible weakness, and forget to have confidence in thee; should we, though aware that for fidelity and righteousness, a great and everlasting recompence has been promised in the gospel, to the truth of which our own experience bears witness; should we continue to be idly agitated by doubt and fear, punish us not, O Lord, with severity; but when devoutly addressing ourselves in prayer to thee, we crave pity, be graciously pleased to restore our energies, to revive our hopes, that, striving against the weakness and wickedness of our own minds, we may, assisted by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, gain the victory.

# EVENING .-- APRIL 28.

GOD'S GOODNESS AND WISDOM INVOKED.

Mercy and judgment are my song; And since they both to thee belong, My gracious God, my righteous king, To thee my songs and vows I bring.

Let wisdom all my actions guide, And let my God with me reside; No wicked thing shall dwell with me, Which may provoke thy jealousy

No sons of slander, rage and strife, Shall be companions of my life; The haughty look, the heart of pride, Within my doors shall ne'er abide.

I'll search the land, and raise the just To posts of honour, wealth, and trust: The men that work thy holy will, Shall be my friends and fav rites still.

Watts.

#### AVOID SIN AND SINNERS. PSALM CI.

2 I will behave myself wisely, in a perfect way: O when wilt thou come unto me. I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

4 A forward heart shall depart from me: I will not know wicked person.

5 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him I will cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

6 Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way,

he shall serve me.

7 He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

# HOLY CONVERSATION AND PIOUS THOUGHTS TO BE ALWAYS AIMED AT.

It sometimes happens, that men who entertain very serious thoughts, think it harmless or expedient, in the ordinary affairs of life, to fall into a carelessness of speech, which gives little evidence of those devout aspirations for which they are disposed to take credit. They ought to bear in mind the words of scripture—"As he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." This is the commandment of our Lord, and they who reverence his name, ought not to think lightly of idle or indecorous conversation. True it may be, that with our best exer-

tions, we cannot render ourselves so holy as he was by whom we are called; but we can aim at approaching it, and whatever we gain in making the attempt, he will behold with pleasure. Imperfect as we find ourselves at last, the very striving at making ourselves better, will win celestial favour. At present, recalling the manner in which our past lives have been spent, we find, alas! that but little good has been accomplished. Where is the wisdom, where the moral worth by which, long ere this, we ought to have been distinguished? These, at least, might have been ours, but where are they? Greatly are we deficient in our perception of what is right and proper, and what can we boast of in the way of kindness and love? When we seem to exhibit these qualities, we feel in our hearts that too frequently they are unreal. It is the mere semblance of them we put forth, displayed by selfishness and vanity. But still worse, we cannot plead that to our brethren we have been even just, and justice, it must be confessed, is but the lowest degree of virtue. Oh, gracious Father! who hast commanded us to be holy, because thou art so; Oh, merciful Redeemer! who hast set us an example that we should follow in thy footsteps, and who hast ransomed us at so high a price, at what an awful distance do we find ourselves from that point which, ere this, we ought to have reached! for far indeed are we from that degree of perfection which here we might attain. Were we loving, merciful, just, and holy, as we know our Creator to be, or could we unrepiningly submit to want, as our Saviour did; endure extremest suffering, and yet praise "our Father who is in heaven," or were we but as faithful to our divine friend, as the repentant Peter, how largely should we gain in peace of mind! how serenely might we exult that the welfare of our immortal souls had been secured! To know that we had timely discovered our errors, and seriously lamented them, would be comparatively happiness, for then should we glow with the joyful consciousness, that he who could pardon the thief on the cross could also extend his mercy to us, being unfeignedly penitent.

Were this our enviable lot, how greatly would the feverish anxieties, and torturing cares, that now beset and oppress our minds, be set at rest. Then could we tranquilly compose ourselves to sleep as Jesus did, regardless of the tempests roar. To us the warring elements could cause no terror. We should be as content to die as to

sleep, and feel no soul-harrowing apprehensions for the future.

And must we, of necessity, ever remain what we feel that till now we have been? Must we continue grovelling between heaven and earth, but imperfectly awake to the call that God and our Redeemer, that religion and self-interest, make upon us; and, still occupied with earthly pursuits, suffer the higher objects placed before our eyes, bliss beyond the grave, and a glorious immortality, to be only thought of occasionally, by mere fits and starts, the subjects of momentary anxiety. No, we will not continue such aliens to reason. We will now, and henceforth, seek to be holy as God is holy; and it shall be our earnest prayer, our constant endeavour, in charity, and in devout resignation to the will of the Most High, to resemble Jesus. New proofs of the renewed and continuing kindness of our Saviour are brought to us with each returning day. Every morning let us repeat the expression of our gratitude, and offer the homage of our humble adoration, and increasing love. We will seek to manifest our faith in Christ, our kindness to our brethren. Yes, great disposer of events, it is the sincere purpose of our hearts, if permitted by thy bounty, again to rejoice in the glory of returning light, thus to fulfil our earthly duties—thus to prove our heavenly aspirings. May our efforts gain thy approving smile, and all our future conduct be less offensive to thy all-seeing eye, than it has been in the days which are fled.

#### FAITH RELIEVES FROM TROUBLE.

That our hearts may not be troubled, but fully satisfied and comforted, we must by faith lay hold on God, take hold of God's strength, which is his mercy in Christ: and most solemnly, most considerately, and most sincerely take God for our God in Christ, and actually enter into covenant with him—this covenant is founded upon Jesus Christ, his satisfaction and righteousness; and therefore, we must also believe in Christ, taking him for our only Lord and Saviour, receiving him by faith as he is offered to us in the gospel, to be all in all to us.

As God offers, so faith receives; God offers himself in Christ, and so faith receives him. God doth, as it were say, in the gospel, O poor lost sinner, come to my son Jesus, take him for the only Lord and Saviour; and by him come to me, and take me for thy God and father; and by faith the poor believer echoeth back, my Lord and my God, I humbly and heartily come to thee, accept of thee, close with thee; and so by faith the believing soul becomes one with God and Christ; and hereupon the soul by faith cleaves to God and Christ, and unfeignedly, and unreservedly resigns and gives up its whole self to God in Christ, taking God in Christ for his, and entirely surrenders up itself to be the Lord's. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Now faith thus acted, will certainly cure all heart troubles.

In order then to obtain solid comfort in all our distresses, let us carefully look whether these acts of faith have really passed upon our souls: have we thus actually, understandingly, and sincerely believed in God, and in Christ? Have we unfeignedly entered into covenant with God in Christ? Can we conclude that God is our God in Christ, by our being his? If we be entirely his, he is ours for certain, 1 John iv. 19; Cant. ii. 16. If we place all our happiness in him, Psalm lxxiii. 25. If we give him the throne in our hearts, subjecting our whole selves to his government, making God in Christ all our love, our trust, joy, desire, delight, fear, our all, cleaving to him alone and above all, depending upon him as our chief good; contending ourselves with him as all-sufficient for us, resigning up ourselves to his good will, to be, to do, and suffer what he will; if we can and do engage ourselves to sincere obedience, that none of his commandments be grievous to us: if in all things we give Christ the pre-eminence: if we have received the Spirit of Christ, as Rom. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 6, which joins us to him, and makes us one spirit with him, and which is a spirit of adoption, whereby the soul seeing his interest in God as his father, can freely go to God in all his straits. If we have the graces of the spirit, as "love, meekness, patience, humility, &c." If we have a resemblance of our father in us, a likeness of disposition to God and Christ, the image of God, the life of Christ manifest in us; if we do side with God, and his cause, in evil times, so that we are willing to part with all things for Christ's sake, and at his call; if it be thus with us in the main bent and constant frame of our hearts, and in the sincerity and integrity of our souls, our consciences in the sight of God bearing us witness that thus it is with us, then may we upon good grounds conclude, that God, the all-sufficient God, is ours, and Christ Jesus who is all fulness, is ours, and then our hearts should not be troubled.

Bunyan.

# MORNING.—APRIL 29.

GOD OUR CONSTANT PROTECTOR.

Great God, attend while Zion sings The joy that from thy presence springs; To spend one day with thee on earth Exceeds a thousand days of mirth.

Might I enjoy the meanest place Within thy house, O God of grace, Not tents of ease, nor thrones of power, Should tempt my feet to leave thy door.

God is our sun, he makes our day; God is our shield, he guards our way From all the assaults of hell and sin, From foes without, and foes within.

O God, our king, whose sovereign sway The glorious hosts of heaven obey, And devils at thy presence flee, Blest is the man that trusts in thee GOD DEIGNS TO ACCEPT THE HOMAGE OF MORTALS.
II CHRONICLES, V.

6 Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multi-

7 And as the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims:

8 For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

9 And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.

10 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:

12 Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord;

14 So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God

THE POWER, MAJESTY, AND GOODNESS OF GOD.

Reflecting men never feel more at a loss than when they seek appropriate terms for honouring the God who gave them the faculties they enjoy. Contemplating these, can man do other than exclaim with the inspired writer, "Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" We rejoice that the sublime Author of our being, permits us to make our solemn appeals to him in all the varying circumstances of life. This we regard as the privilege conceded by paternal love. He allows us to acknowledge his ceaseless care, and at all times to lay our supplications before his throne. To him for consolation and assistance we are encouraged constantly to apply, and he has promised not to disregard our wishes, not to reject our prayers. That he does not reject them, when breathed with fervour and sincerity, our own happy experience can testify. Exalted as he is, not even the se-

Watts.

raphs that rejoice in his presence, can find strains appropriate to the celebration of his glory; but still that condescending kindness which extends from the bright host of heaven, to the meanest reptile that lives on the face of the earth, has not disdained to receive our petitions. We desire, O Lord! to improve the opportunity thus afforded to us, for seeking thy blessing and protec-To that end we will strive earnestly with our God, that his blessed influence may be shed on us still more abundantly through Jesus Christ. whose kingdom, through what remains to us of life, it shall be our anxious aim to extend. With all that humility of soul, which is proper to those who feel their transgressions have not been few, we will hold ourselves prepared to stand forth heroes in the cause of Christ, opposing with resolution which nothing can for a moment shake, the baneful labours of the powers of darkness.

That power which ordains numerous suns to shine, and indicates the points whence their rays shall fall on the orbs they are to illuminate, has deigned, with equal care, to place within the view of man the road which he ought to pursue, and to provide that the devout breathings of the feeble sojourner here, shall as readily find access to thy immortal ear, as the anthems of the angels in

heaven.

When the mind dwells on the wonders our mortal eyes have seen, as well as on the grand truths made known to us by revelation, how infinitely greater do we feel our God must be than all kings and lords, or kings of kings, and lords of lords, on earth! Superior as he is in power, he still more clearly transcends them in goodness. while they pass over the appeals of their subjects unheeded. The Holy One to whom we address ourselves, most unbounded as his mighty empire is, attends with bounteous care to the millions who claim his gracious interference on their behalf,

But if we are really his—if we are followers of the lamb as he was, so must we be patient. Insensible to pain and outrage we cannot be; but these we must view as incidents on the road of life, such as a Christian ought to be prepared to endure. Small indeed are the sharpest trials we can know, compared with those to which the Saviour of man was exposed. These considerations will enable us to bear up against our own ruffled feelings, and make us content to wait for relief, till God is pleased to grant it. We may suffer, and sharply for a time, but great will be our reward, and perfect our consolation, in the end.

From early infancy we have to acknowledge the gracious protection and continued kindness of the Deity. Amply has a kind Providence supplied all our wants, till gaining mature years, we feel ourselves capable of manifesting our gratitude for the past, and of praying a continuance of the blessings we have known from timetotime, through the rest of our days. Be with us from this day forward in all our doings. Turn not from us, O Lord; for, unsustained by thy all-powerful hand, we must of necessity sink ere the present hour shall have reached its close. In thee we have heretofore rejoiced; on thee to the end of our

lives we rest all our hope.

But not for ourselves alone do we pray. If we presume not too much in soliciting for others, we should implore thee to look with an eye of compassion on all our brethren, and especially on those who, pining in adversity, look up to thee this morning, in anguish and despondency. Let unhoped-for comfort be theirs, that at the end of this day, they may fervently laud thy name for the happy experience which it has brought them, and be ready to shout with joy, "Blessed be the Lord, who hath not turned away our prayers, nor his mercy from us." May tears of joy attest the sincerity of the exclamation, and may all the just be glad, and proclaim thy salvation, and we. sharing their delight, join with heart and voice to swell the strain of devout gratitude.

#### THE JOY OF THE RIGHTEOUS ON EARTH.

If I should tell a worldling what the holiness and spiritual joys of the saints on earth are, he cannot know, for grace cannot be clearly known without grace; how much less could he conceive it, should I tell him of this glory? But to the saints I may be somewhat more encouraged to speak. for grace gives them a dark knowledge and slight taste of glory. If men and angels should study to speak the blessedness of that state in one word, what could they say beyond this, that it is the nearest enjoyment of God! O the full joys offered to a believer in that one sentence of Christ, Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." John xvii. 24. Every word is full of life and joy. If the queen of Sheba had cause to say of Solomon's glory, " Happy are thy men, happy are thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom," (1 Kings x. 8.) then sure they that stand continually before God, and see his glory, and the glory of the Lamb, are more than happy. To them will Christ "give to eat of the tree of life, and to eat of the hidden manna; yea, he will make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out; and he will write upon them the name of his God, and the name of the city of his God. which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from his God, and he will write upon them his new name:" yea, more, if more may be, " he will grant them to sit with him on his throne." These are they "who came out of great

tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them. and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. ii. 7—17; iii. 12—21; vii. 14, 15—17. O blind, deceived world can you show us such a glory? This is the city of our God, where "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. The glory of God shall lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And there shall be no more curses; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servant shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. sayings are faithful and true, and the things which must shortly be done." Rev. xxi. 3.—24; xxi. 3, 4.—6. And now we say as Mephibosheth, "Let the world take all, forasmuch as our Lord will come in peace." 2 Sam. xix. 30. "Rejoice, therefore, in the Lord, O ye righteous, and say with his servant David, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Baxter.

# EVENING.—APRIL 29.

THE JOY OF PRAISING GOD.

Sweet is the work, my God, my king, To praise thy name, give thanks and sing, To shew thy love by morning light, And talk of all thy truth at night.

Sweet is the day of sacred rest, No mortal cares shall seize my breast, O may my heart in tune be found, Like David's harp of solemn sound!

My heart shall triumph in my Lord, And bless his works, and bless his word; Thy works of grace how bright they shine! How deep thy counsels! How divine!

Fools never raise their thoughts so high; Like brutes they live, like brutes they die; Like grass they flourish, 'till thy breath Blast them in everlasting death.

But I shall share a glorious part, When grace hath well refin'd my heart, And fresh supplies of joy are shed Like holy oil to cheer my head.

Watts.

#### BE GLAD IN THE LORD. PSALM XXXII.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

7 Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliver-

ance. Selah

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou

shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye.

9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trust-

eth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

OUR DEVOTIONS SHOULD BE OFFERED TO GOD WHEN WE ARE HAPPY, AS WELL AS WHEN WE ARE IN AFFLICTION.

The facility with which we forget God, when we are not oppressed by apprehension or sorrow, is as surprising as it is melancholy. What those who act such a part will do, is distinctly told us in scripture. "In the time of their trouble, they will say, Arise and save us." Such is habitually the course of man. We, ourselves, have more frequently prayed in the hour of anxiety and alarm, than in those of cheerfulness and hope. Our terrors have suggested that which love and veneration failed to prompt. Can such homage be acceptable to the holy, wise, and just one? He, whose all-seeing eye explores the most secret recesses of every heart, knows how weak, how wanton, how forgetful of the bounty extended to us we have proved, when the danger which appalled us has passed by; and aware of this, can supplications like those we have presumed to address to him, find favour in his sight. The question is a fearful one, and we, in vain, task our ingenuity, to give a satisfactory answer to the awakened conscience. Can we too severely reprove the gross folly of which we stand self-convicted, in only raising our thoughts to heaven in our anxious hours, when sickness afflicts, peril disturbs, or heavy losses depress, in the hope that our tears will move the Lord of all, to hasten to our assistance. How perverse have we been! Is it only in seasons of distress that our vows should be offered, to win the Almighty's instant protection? to induce him to show us mercy?

It is thus that we have proceeded from year to year, as if rational beings might presume the Most High was on extraordinary occasions, to attend their bidding, but at other times, to receive no homage, no offering of gratitude from those he had called into existence, and distinguished by fashioning in his own image. Such a course we must no longer pursue. In moments of tranquillity, when we exult in the happiness we are permitted to prove, we will remember our heavenly Father. That happiness shall wake new devotion in our bosoms, while we gratefully acknowledge

that all proceeds from him.

Who is there among us that does not feel how ill it would become any man to walk forth with a haughty bearing, and say, "I have well deserved to be happy by a pious and faithful discharge of all the duties of life, and such reward I claim not as a boon, but as a matter of justice." Which of the sons of men can we persuade ourselves is entitled to hold language like this? To what, after all, does our piety and careful attention to the duties imposed upon us amount, if weighed in the balance? To nothing that could deserve the slightest of the many benefits which we have to acknowledge. None of these have we really deserved.

Sincere veneration for God, and love of Christ, will grow on true faith. If we have seldom felt that veneration and that love in our hearts, we have been wanting in faith. Did we reverence the dying testimonials of a Saviour's devoted zeal in the cause of sinners, we could not but turn from the evil of our ways. And to this self-love, our own interest, as well as duty, would incline us, were the reason with which we are endowed exercised. To gain that heavenly home, which it was the object of our glorious Redeemer to secure for us, must surely be regarded as an object incomparably more valuable than any the earth can hold out to tempt avarice or excite ambition.

But we have lived as if all that our Creator proffers were in our estimation of no value, or as if it were no more than our due, which we might claim at pleasure. If possible, let us get rid of this hardness of heart, let us shake off this dull insensibility for ever. No more must we seem only thoughtful of our Lord in the day of trouble; we will seek him—we will offer our adoration to him in the moments of our greatest felicity, when want is not experienced, and when every danger appears remote. Less vigilant, less benevolent, less devoted to truth than we ought to be, and withal wanting in resignation to the will of God, as negligent of the precepts and ex-

ample of Christ, we, acknowledging all past deficiencies, will make it the great study of our lives for the future, to correct them, and applying ourselves zealously to benefit those of our fellowmen who stand in need of aid, throw ourselves with full confidence on the tender mercy of our Lord. Imitating his reverence for holiness, and his meekness, in the absence of which, we can deserve no favour from on high; the deceit, the falsehood, which has sometimes lingered on our lips, shall be known to us no more. Henceforth, eternal Father, our hearts shall be wholly thine! This resolution fixed in our memories, its importance duly impressed on our souls, not only under the pressure of calamity but in the hour of joy, our prayers will duly ascend to the author of the universe. The language of gratitude, the feeling of thankfulness will never be absent from our hearts, when we are free from pain and danger, and the homage so offered will be graciously received by the Eternal.

#### RELY ON THE WORD OF GOD TO FIND COMFORT.

Reader, for thine own sake, and for the glory of God, take heed what thou buildest thy faith upon. Beware of making any thing, that sense reports to thee, the ground of it, but rest it upon that which abideth for ever. The word of God is a sure foundation. It will never fail thee. Thou mayest safely depend upon it, because it cannot be broken, and stedfastly rely upon Christ to make its promises good to thee. There's thy object. Look at him. And since he is thine, thy Saviour and thy God, make use of him as such, and trust body and soul, and all thing belonging to them, in his hands, and among the rest thy comforts. Be content he should give them to thee as seemeth him good. Set not thy heart upon them, nor follow him, as the multitude did, for the sake of his loaves and fishes, and the dainties that he gave them, who, when these were withheld, soon forgot their kind Benefactor. Thou art by faith to make up all thy happiness in him, and in him only; and, he himself being thine, let him give thee, or take away what he will besides, thou hast enough. What! is not this comfort enough, that thou hast got the pearl of great price, the infinitely rich, inestimable, precious Jesus? who has the wisdom of God to contrive what is best for thee. boundless love to dispose him, and almighty power to enable him to give it thee, and he has promised it; canst thou desire more? Walk then with him by faith, and not by sight. When the word of God is the ground of thy faith, which rests there, and is grown to a fixed settlement, then thou wil: be enabled to go on comfortably, whatever thy frames and feelings be; yea, when these are at the lowest ebb, thou wilt not be thereby discouraged. Suppose thou art walking in darkness, thou canst walk by faith; because thou hast a promise; "Who is among you that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Isa. i. 10. Still let him trust and believe. Why? Because God is his God still. Mind thathis God still; this blessed relation still subsists, and faith may draw comfort from it in the darkest hour. Suppose thou art in heaviness through manifold temptations, the word says

to thee, "heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning:" here thou mayest quiet thy heavy heart, and rest with confidence till the Lord deliver thee out of thy temptations. Suppose God hideth his face from thee, thou hast the example of those in the same case: "I will wait for the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and will look for him," Isa. viii. 17. Wait in faith, looking for him, and thou shalt see the light of his countenance. Suppose all other comforts fail, thou hast one still, worth more than all .- " This God is my God for ever and ever. He will never leave me nor forsake me." This is the happiness of the true believer; he is enabled to maintain his confidence, when sensible feelings are no more. And thou seest, reader, how this happiness is attained, and how it is preserved. It is by trusting to things which change not, the word of God, the Son of God, and his promises, all which are in him, yea, made in him, and in him, Amen, fulfilled by him. May the Lord help thee simply to trust his word, and to live upon Christ for the fulfilling of it, and then thou wilt indeed get, what thou art now seeking in vain, a comfortable frame, and wilt be enabled to maintain it against all the discouragements of sense.

Romaine.

# MORNING.—APRIL 30.

THE SINNER'S EYES OPENED.

Dear Saviour! make me wise to see My sin, and guilt, and remedy; 'Tis said, of all thy blood has bought, "They shall of Israel's God be taught."

Their plague of heart thy people know; They know thy name, and trust thee too; They know the gospel's blissful sound, The path where endless joys abound.

They know the Father and the Son, Theirs is eternal life begun: Unto salvation they are wise,— Their grace shall into glory rise.

But ignorance itself am I; Born blind—estrang'd from thee I lie; O Lord! to thee I humbly own I nothing know as should be known.

I scarce know God, or Christ, or sin,— My foes without, or plague within; Know not my interest, Lord, in thee, In pardon, peace, or liberty!

But help me to declare to-day, If many things I cannot say, "One thing I know," all praise to thee, "Though blind I was—yet now I see.

Rippon's Collection.

THE DISOBEDIENT SINNER CAN HAVE NO HOPE, BUT IN THE MERCY OF THE DEITY. DANIEL IX.

3 I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

4 And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from

thy precepts and from thy judgments :

6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

7 O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel; that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

8 O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned

against thee.

9 To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.

#### GOD'S MERCY PRAYED FOR TIME MISPENT.

There are those who think, that when a Christian reproves unseemly or foolish speech, that he is unnecessarily severe. It is much more easy to fall into the opposite error. 'Mark what the Saviour says-"But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Such is the solemn declaration of Christ. It should not be lightly passed over. Of every idle deed and thought and gesture, we shall one day have to render an account. If it be so, let us pause for a moment, and seriously interrogate ourselves, on this day, when a considerable section of time, a month, is brought to a close, as to how that month has been spent. Humiliating as we may find it, to look at what our conduct has been during the last thirty days, we must not decline to enter upon the task. The investigation will have the good effect of exposing to our minds the self-deceiving practices from which we have suffered, the foolish arrogance into which we have been betrayed; and, these known, we cannot but wonder at the divine forbearance which has spared those who have sinned so largely. As a matter of course we shall feel, from the mournful retrospect, the necessity of imploring God for mercy; and of endeavouring to gain a claim to that mercy, by improving our minds, and fortifying our faith.

Now, O Lord, even now, let the holy work

commence. Unspeakably great, we acknowledge the works of thy loving kindness to have been during the period which we recal. Would that blessings so marked had been duly acknowledged; would that they had touched our hearts, and taught them to glow with animated love for the gracious Being who has done so much for the happiness of man. We feel abashed and confounded, when we contemplate the extent of thy love, and the magnitude of our own depravity. Every happy hour which we have known, has been a voice calling on us to be piously grateful. Every exemption granted from suffering supplied a new exhortation, and called upon us to apply ourselves with earnestness to prove that we were not coldly insensible to the bounty of our God. Unhappily we have not been awake to duty; we have not found it our greatest source of delight to contemplate the favours which his goodness from time to time bestowed, with a liberal hand. We have not done this, and exultingly proclaimed them to our fellow-men. Though every thing that came to pass, preached to us, O God! of thy love, we cannot aver that, duly penetrated with the gracious watchfulness which guarded us by night and day, we have responded to it by loving thee in return, with all our hearts and with all our souls; nor has it been unceasingly our aim to regulate our actions in accordance with thy laws. We have not been prepared to sacrifice our goods, our happiness, and our lives, if necessary, to thy glory.

Do we suffer our thoughts to dwell on what our recent deportment has been, towards those of our fellow creatures near whom it has been thy will that we should be placed, and find comfort from seeing that they have owned our conduct has been marked by the warm and generous emotions of fraternal love? Have we humanely and assiduously been anxious for them as for ourselves; and laboured, with sincere zeal, to promote their temporal and eternal welfare? Has it been bliss to us to find that an opportunity for benefiting the poor was within our reach; that to us was assigned the honour of assisting the miserable, and supporting the distressed?

Further, thus communing with ourselves, let each put the question to himself, "Having differed from others, was I always ready to be reconciled with my offending brethren, to banish ill-will from my heart, and to forego the pleasure of availing myself of any opportunity that offered for revenge? Did I love my enemies? Did I

bless them that cursed me? Did I do good to them that hated me? Did I pray for them which despitefully used and persecuted me? Was I, in happiness or misfortune, anxious to set a worthy example to my fellow men? and finally, can I feel assured that I have been true to myself, by pursuing a virtuous and correct course, through each day of this month?" Such questions solemnly pressed, who among us can satisfactorily answer? Which of us can declare, that even within that limited period, "weighed in the balance, he would not be found wanting?"

Omniscient Creator! from thy all-searching glance, we nothing can conceal. Thou art not to be deceived, and thou knowest the number of our sins. Alas! should it be thy pleasure to enter into judgment with us for the single month approaching to its end, how could we dare appear in thy awful presence? Dealt with according to our merits, thy protecting, favouring hand, would at once be withdrawn, and we should feel all the hopeless misery to which our actions tend. Should justice and not mercy prevail, thou, O God!—we tremble at the thought—might at once cut down that barren tree which, though fruitless, has so long been permitted to stand.

Sadness and gloom come over us, while these ideas pass through our minds; but remembering the grace which our Saviour has gained for sinners, with all humility, but still with perfect trust and confidence, we raise our thoughts to thee, O Lord! and earnestly hope that thou, in the fulness of thy bounty, wilt yet extend the period of probation which has been allotted to us, and grant us enlarged minds, and purified hearts, to make a better use of our time, for the future, than we have heretofore done. Let the influence of thy Holy Spirit govern us, and let our obedient souls, no longer forgetful of the important considerations which call them to devout exercises, be more awake to duty. Let them no longer, by neglect and disobedience, incur the awful risk of losing thy favour for ever. Aware of the fearful character of our late transgressions, our thoughts shall now be fixed on more exalted objects; our aspirings shall be more worthy of beings destined to immortality. May God deign to govern us through all our future days. We will walk before him, and try to be perfect. O God! be our shield, and, in the end, our great reward. Those whom it has been thy pleasure to create, deign to save! Have mercy upon us !-have mercy upon us !

IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING THAT FUTURE REWARDS

AND PUNISHMENTS ARE RESERVED FOR MAN.

Though it should be granted, that according to the most usual and general course of things, both virtuous and vicious actions are rewarded and punished in this life; yet there may be many particular cases, which this motive would not reach unto; namely, all such cases where a man's reason shall inform him, that there is far greater probability of safety and advantage by committing a sin, than can be reasonably expected (according to his experience of the usual course of things in the world) by doing his duty. Suppose the case of the three children, or of any other called to martyrdom, who may be threatened with torments and death, unless they will blaspheme God and renounce their religion; if it appear to them very probable (suppose a hundred to one) that upon their refusal, their persecutors will really execute what they threaten: and if on the other side, it prove very improbable (suppose ten thousand to one) that they shall be delivered by a miracle: in such cases, it is not to be expected, that the consideration of the ordinary course of Providence in the dispensation of rewards and punishments, should be sufficient to restrain a man from any kind of blasphemy or villany

But the thing I am speaking to, will more fully appear, by consideration of those horrid mischiefs of all kinds, that would most naturally follow from the denial of this doctrine.

If there be no such thing to be expected as happiness or misery hereafter, why then the only business that men are to take care of, is their present well-being in this world. There being nothing to be counted either good or bad, but in order to these: Those things which we conceive to be conducible to it, being the only duties; and all other things that are cross to it, being the only sins. And therefore whatever a man's appetite shall incline him to, he ought not to deny himself in it (be the thing what it will) so he can have it, or do it without probable danger.

Suppose it be matter of gain or profit he is disposed to; if he can cheat or steal securely, this will be so far from being a fault, that it is plainly his duty, that is, reasonable for him to do, because it is a proper means to promote his chief end.

And so for other cases of anger, hatred, revenge, etc. According to this principle a man must take the first opportunity of satisfying these passions, by doing any kind of mischief to the person he is offended with; whether by false accusation and perjury, or (if need be) by poisoning or stabbing of him; provided he can do these things so as to escape the suspicion of others, and human penalties.

Now let any man judge, what bears and wolves, and devils, men would prove to one another, if every thing should be not only lawful, but a duty, whereby they might gratify their impetuous lusts; if they might either perjure themselves, or steal, or murder, as often as they could do it safely, and get

any advantage by it.

Bishop of Chester, 1680.

# EVENING.—APRIL 30.

THE BEAUTIES OF CREATION.

Thy Providence fix'd
The stream and its source;
The sea knows its bounds,
The rivers their course;

Convey'd through dark conduits, Springs rise on the hills, They burst on the fountains, They fall on the rills.

The beasts of the world
Their forests forsake,
The herd quits the field,
To drink of the lake;
On trees crown'd with verdure
Its margin along,
Birds warbling sweet music,
Praise God in their song.

Descending on hills,
Clouds plenteousness pour,
All nature revives,
Earth smiles in the shower;
A garment of verdure
Apparels the plain,
Fruits sweli in the garden,
Fields wave with their grain

With moisture refresh'd,
The vine yields its fruit;
'Tis balm to our hearts,
To health a recruit:
With transport we gather
The richness of oil;
'Tis strength to our body,
Support to our toil.

Drummond's Collection.

LET ALL THE EARTH REJOICE IN THE LORD. PSALM XCVI.

2 Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7 Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

8 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

10 Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice.

THE OPENING BEAUTIES OF SPRING, OUGHT TO MAKE THE CHRISTIAN'S HEART EXPAND WITH WARM DEVOTION.

It cannot be denied, that where science is concerned, great and admirable advances have been made in modern times. Growing out of these

perhaps it is, that we see too many efforts to We ideeed see the improve upon religion. friends of innovation too frequently coming forward with what they wish the world to regard as improvements, regardless of the scriptural admonition, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein." We ought to obey the voice of the Lord, which thus calls upon us to act, and ask for the old paths in which we formerly walked. Now, arrived at the close of another month, this subject deserves our espe-A thousand months we cial consideration. cannot expect to live, nor, indeed, scarcely half so long, with a mature understanding; and of those originally allotted to our mortal existence, how many are already behind us? How many remain for us to see? Possibly not one. But, alas! when we "stand in the ways, and see," what do we discover in ourselves? We discover much mean trifling, gross folly, and a mournful neglect of important matters, that our thoughts may be squandered on valueless trifles. How many of those things which we have tasked ourselves to gain, do we now discover were wholly unworthy of the restless anxiety and laborious exertions which we devoted to their acquisition. Thus have we wasted precious time, which never can be recalled, to gain the favour of men, and to amass such goods as could only place on our hearts the burden of care.

While thus sordidly persevering in what relates to worldly affairs, conscience fails not to whisper, that we have acted a very different part, where ceaseless labour would have been wise, inasmuch as it could not but tend to our eternal benefit. But where solemn duties have been pressed upon us, when we have been earnestly enjoined to seek the ways of righteousness, how ready has the greedy, selfish, ungodly heart, been disposed suspiciously to ask, "And what will be my reward?" In this case we have been as fiercely exacting, as in the other we have been blindly negligent.

Little cause have we to boast, that we have been universally and inviolably faithful to the great God who gave us being. How mournfully fickle have we proved our hearts; how soon has their zeal in the cause of sacred truth been abated, and how powerfully has self-love acted, to plunge us into a career of dissipation, and to engage us in the pursuit of all the wicked vanities of the world. We cannot rejoice in the reflection, that

we have continued to walk in the old paths, and look back with self-congratulation on the good deeds we have performed in the days we have numbered. To the great omniscient Being, who sees, and who knows the secrets of our hearts, we dare not affirm, that we have walked in his ways, nor can we take credit for our imperfect, our always doubtful, tottering, and unsteady virtue.

Yet it has been ours to be brought to the knowledge of a gracious Deity. O Thou! in whose sight a thousand years are as a watch in the night, we find, and most grave is the reflection. that we have been, by a vast step, advanced to thy tribunal. This we most unquestionably know, and with grief and shame, the thought necessarily comes over us, how little of our life has been passed in a manner fitted to prepare our spirits for eternity! The vain and foolish heart has, again and again, wandered from its God, and devoted all its powers to the acquisition of earthly treasure. When the monitor within, faithful to duty, has whispered to us the importance of making preparation for our final ordeal, "Not vet," has been the careless answer: "some other day will suffice for that; to-day, business of importance demands our every thought." Important business, forsooth! Business connected with worldly gain has absorbed our minds, and we have found no leisure for attending to the comparatively unimportant consideration (if an inference may be drawn from our conduct) of the interests of a life beyond the grave, which will never know

Let us apply ourselves to inquire, how have we occupied ourselves during the last thirty days. Can we recollect even but ten actions for which we shall have reason to rejoice in eternity? We have indeed rejoiced to see the fields clothed with new verdure, have admired the opening buds, and listened with pleasure to the coy warbling of the nightingale; but did these, as they ought, warm our hearts to pray with greater fervour, that grace might descend upon us, more successfully to war against our sinful desires, or more anxiously to promote the welfare of our neighbour? No; we have looked on with admiration indeed, but the brightening scene has not kindled in our bosoms those feelings of gratitude to the glorious source of our being, which ought to have grown on the heart-cheering spectacle.

We mourn that our hearts are so barren of virtuous feeling. Grant, Lord Jesus! in the month on which we are about to enter, that we may sow a nobler seed, mingled though it may be with tears of bitter regret, and deep humiliation for the past. May each day of the coming bright season, be improved by our devout cares for the well-being of our souls. Fain would we consecrate to thy service, Oh God! each succeeding day, by the assiduous performance of good works, by acts such as thou, from thy high throne, must approve. Wiser grown from experience, may we thus strive to possess ourselves of treasures which can never fade; and from sowing such seed here, qualify ourselves to reap a blessed harvest above the sky.

#### FLOWERS OF THE MIND TO BE CULTIVATED.

See! with what assiduity the curious florist attends his little nursery! He visits them early and late, furnishes them with the properest mould, supplies them with seasonable moisture, guards them from the ravages of insects, screens them from the injuries of the weather, marks their springing buds, observes them attentively through their whole progress, and never intermits his anxiety, till he beholds them blown into full perfection.—And shall a range of painted leaves, which flourish to-day, and to-morrow fall to the ground—shall these be tended with more zealous application than the exalted faculties of an immortal soul!

Yet trust not in cultivation alone. It is the blessing of the Almighty husbandman, which imparts success to such labours of love. If God "seal up the bottles of heaven," and command the clouds to withhold their fatness, the best manured plot becomes a barren desert. And if He restrain the dew of his heavenly benediction, all human endeavours miscarry; the rational plantation languishes; our most pregnant hopes, from youths of the most promising genius prove abortive. Their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will go up as dust.—Therefore, let parents plant; let tutors water; but let both look up to the Father of Spirits, for the desired increase.

On every side, I espy several budding flowers. As yet they are like bales of cloth from the packer's warehouse. Each is wrapt within a strong inclosure, and its contents are tied together by the firmest bandages. So that all their beauties lie concealed, and all their sweets are locked up.—Just such is the niggardly wretch, whose aims are all turned inward, and meanly terminated upon himself; who makes his own private interests, or personal pleasures, the sole centre of his designs, and the scanty circumference of his actions.

Ere long, the searching beams will open these silken folds, and draw them into a graceful expansion. Then, what a lovely blush will glow in their cheeks, and what a balmy odour exhale from their bosoms!—So, when divine grace shines upon the mind, even the churl becomes bountiful. The heart of stone is taken way, and a heart of fesh, a heart susceptible of the softest, most compassionate emotions, is introduced in its stead. O! how sweetly do the social affections dilate themseives, under so benign an influence! Just like these disclosing gems, under the powerful eye of day. The tender regards, are no longer confined to a single object; but extend themselves into a generous concern for mankind, and shed liberal refreshments on all within their reach

Arise, then, thou Sun of righteousness, arise, with I ealing under thy wings; and transfuse thy gentle, but penetrating ray, through all our intellectual powers. Enlarge every narrow disposition, and fill us with a diffusive benevolence. Make room in our breasts, for the whole human race; and teach us to love all our fellow-creatures, for their amiable Creator's sake. May we be pleased with their excellencies, and rejoice in their happiness, but feel their miseries as our own, and with a brother's sympathy, hasten to relieve them!

Hervey.

### MORNING .-- MAY 1.

GOD SEEN IN THE SEASONS OF THE YEAR,

Eternal source of every joy!
Well may thy praise our lips employ,
While in thy temple we appear,
To hail thee, Sov'reign of the year.

Wide as the wheels of nature roll, Thy hand supports and guides the whole: The sun is taught by thee to rise, And darkness when to veil the skies.

The flowery spring at thy command Perfumes the air and paints the land, The summer rays with vigour shine To raise the corn and cheer the vine.

Thy hand, in autumn, richly pours Thro' all our coasts redundant stores; And winters, soften'd by thy care, No more the face of horror wear.

Seasons, and months, and weeks, and days, Deniand successive songs of praise; And be the grateful homage paid With morning light, and evining shade.

Burder's Collection.

GOD'S WORKS ARE ALL GOOD. GENESIS I.

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.

THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE IN SPRING, LIFT THE REFLECTING MIND TO THEIR IMMORTAL AUTHOR.

This is the period of the year in which the works of our Creator come before us with their richest lustre. "He sends forth his spirit, and they are created, and he renews the face of the

earth." That which seemed dead now lives, and all becomes young again. The birds in the air, the fishes in the sea, the animals in the forest. the blossoms in the fields, all awake to a new and beautiful existence. We cannot look on the earth we inhabit, smiling in renewed youth and brightness, without feeling how good, how mighty is the Lord our God; and, how greatly blessed are we to be the objects of his tenderness and love! All the riches-all the beauties of nature he has Can we behold them in their created for us. glory without feeling that the object of it must be to raise our thoughts to their mighty Creator? The spectacle naturally leads us to present the offering of our gratitude to the Holy One, to whom all adoration is due.

Wherever we turn our eyes, to him our hearts offer involuntary homage; whether we look up to heaven, or gaze upon the earth, in every part we find cause for wonder and delight. The trees, the fields, so superbly attired; the refulgence of the morning sun; the exultation of the brute creation; the songs of the birds; the smiling aspect of the groves, join to announce the might and the bounty of the Omnipotent author of the universe.

To him, at this early hour, all creation joins to offer grateful incense. The lark soaring towards the sky, welcomes the day bursting from it; the forest resounds with hymns of praise to the Almighty from the feathered choir; and every flower, every blade of grass, every opening blossom, every daisy-spangled meadow, exhorts the contemplative mind not to fail in offering a tribute of admiration and gratitude, to Him whose mighty hand prepared the goodly scene. At such a moment can man, ungrateful man, remain silent and unmoved? How can the cold heart of any breathing mortal refrain from praising the Deity whose works are so brilliant, whose pleasure it has been to bring such glorious wonders before our eves!

Joy and apparent thankfulness seems to animate the creatures to whom reason has been denied, but how much more are we beloved by the Eternal than they can be, for how highly are we raised above them all! If we are aware of this, we must feel that it so much the more behoves us to exert ourselves to sound his praise, and to acknowledge his mercies in a manner appropriate to our superior nature. It is demanded from us by the position we occupy, and the invaluable privileges we enjoy.

But how can we worthily praise the unspeakably glorious Deity, in whose honour we would raise our voice. O Lord of all! thou art too sublime for our finite capacities to comprehend thy majesty. Eternal Father, we lament that we know not how to glorify thee in adequate terms. Thou art all in all. Thy command is given, and that which thou willest is done. It is thine to bid a world appear, and it starts into existence: thou biddest a system vanish, and it is no more. The sun is sustained by thy strong arm; the sea, controlled by thee, forbears to pass the limits which thou hast prescribed; to the smallest as well as the mightiest objects in creation, thy power and intelligence extends; and that thou art omnipotent and wonderful, is as clearly seen in the smallest insect, as in the formation of the globe we inhabit.

How can we sufficiently humble ourselves before that awful and almighty Being, who has created unnumbered worlds, the suns of whose systems are visible to us. Children of dust, and wholly insignificant as we are compared with him who made us, and who renews, from time to time, the form of our earth, what is our understanding by the side of his wisdom who created all things. It is for us then to bow before his awful seat, and confess what we must necessarily feel, that we can never worthily praise his name.

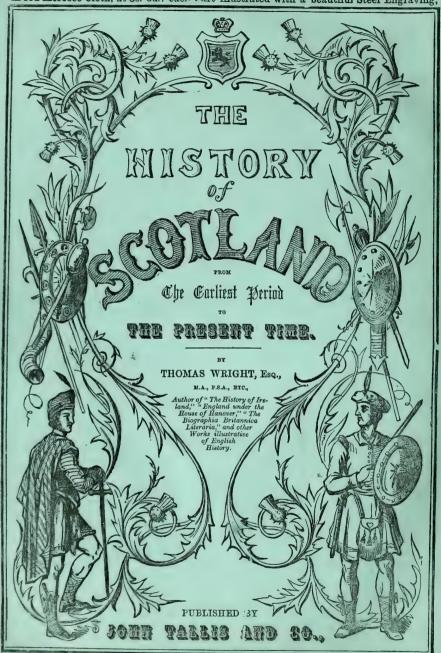
But though not worthy of his greatness, the adoration of the Christian may still be acceptable to the Lord of all. Oh! then, let our souls join to use the understanding they may claim; let us learn to recognise God in renovated nature; let our hearts feel his grandeur and his majesty, while our eyes seek the thousand beauties which the spring recals. These, while beheld, will not fail to kindle feelings of warm devotion and unsounded admiration, and they will serve to strengthen our faith. We shall gain through this medium a clearer view of a higher world, and rejoice in our Lord.

As all things concur to prove the greatness, the grandeur, and the power of God, let us never cease to breathe his name with appropriate veneration and gratitude. Be that the theme of our love—of our constant praise. So far as may be we will strive to consecrate all our faculties to him. To obey his commandments, to conform to his acts, shall be our study, and with this purpose, we will aim at setting others an example of rational devotion, and thus gain for him hearts, which at the present moment, are unhappily es-



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tranged from their Maker. Such labours will be grateful to him; such an offering will be graciously received like the music of the woods at this blythe season, and condescending mercy will conduct the patient anxious pilgrim to the spring of living waters, where he will be refreshed with new draughts of bliss, rich, refreshing, and fraught with unutterable bliss.

#### HARMONY AND EXCELLENCE OF GOD'S SYSTEM.

Much might be spoken by way of analogy between the internal and external, the spiritual and the material ornaments of the church; but both of them serve to dress and set off the spouse of Christ; the first to recommend her to his own eyes, and the latter to the eyes of the world.

Where would be the beauty of the heavens themselves, if it were not for the multitude of the stars, and the variety of their influences? And then, for the earth here below and those who dwell therein, certainly we might live without the plumes of peacocks, and the curious colours of flowers; without so many different odours, so many several tastes, and such an infinite diversity of airs and sounds. But where would then be the glory and lustre of the universe, the flourish and gaiety of nature, if our senses were forced to be always poring upon the same things, without the diversion of change, and the quickening relish of variety? And now, when matters stand thus, may we not justly say, if God so clothes the fields, so paints the flowers, and paves the very places we tread upon, and with such curiosity provides for all our senses, which yet are but the servants and under-officers of the soul, shall he not much more provide for the soul itself and his own service thereby, in the glorious economy, and great concernments of the church? And moreover, does not such a liberal effusion of gifts equally argue both the power and the bounty of the Giver? Number and multitude are the signs of riches, and the materials of plenty; and therefore, though unity in the government and communion of the church is indeed a great blessing, yet, in the gifts and endowments of it, it would be but penury and a curse. But,

2. As this diversity of the Spirit's gifts imports variety, so it excludes contrariety. Different they are, but they are not opposite. There is no jar, no combat or contest between them, but all are disposed of with mutual agreements and a happy subordination; for as variety adorns, so opposition destroys. Things most different in nature may yet be united in the same design; and the most distant lines may meet

and clasp in the same centre.

As for instance, one would think that the spirit of meekness and the spirit of zeal stood at that distance of contrariety, as to defy all possibility either of likeness or reconcilement; and yet (as we have already shown) they both may and do equally serve and carry on the great end and business of religion. And the same spirit which baptizes with water, baptizes also with fire. It is an art to attain the same end by several methods, and to make things of a quite contrary operation to concur in one and the same effect.

Dr. South.

## EVENING .- MAY. 1.

GOD'S GOODNESS EVERYWHERE MANIFESTED.

O! may I prize a throne of grace, Accessible in ev'ry place; Where'er I lift my soul in pray'r, On earth or sea, my God is there.

If in the hour of deep distress, Its woes my heart in sighs express; A sweet return of love I find, To soothe the sorrows of the mind.

Or when the grateful odours rise Of praise; delightful sacrifice! My soul expands with joys unknown To ev'ry bosom, but its own.

Ah! whence proceeds this sacred love, Descending gently from above? To thee, blest Saviour, and thy blood, I owe this precious gift of God.

O! may I daily love thee more, Of blessings, thou, the bounteous store; On me let ev'ry grace descend. Thou source of bliss-thou sinner's friend!

Christian Retirement,

GOD'S GREATNESS-MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE. ECCLESIASTES, 111.

11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

12 I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

13 And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

15 That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

16 ¶ And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous, and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for

18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see

that they themselves are beasts.

19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn

to dust again.

21 Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?



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THE ALMIGHTY TO BE STUDIED IN HIS WORKS.

"Array thyself in thy glorious attire," is the language addressed by the prophet to his countrymen, in the prospect of their approaching deliverance. "Array thyself in thy glorious attire," is the command now issued by the Lord of Hosts to his world, and by the world his gracious fiat is Behold smiling spring makes her apobeved. pearance as a friend among friends, by whom she has been long and anxiously expected. In all her glory she comes, and calls upon us to rejoice and be thankful to God. Her voice penetrates deeply into our hearts, while hill and valley resound with songs of gladness; and can a human being witness the bright and animated scene, and remain unmoved, while all nature, newly awakened from the long and dreary sleep of winter, invites us to enjoy the gay spectacle, and to praise the bounty of its almighty giver. To sound thy praise, to proclaim thy goodness, O God! is our duty. Everywhere we perceive, with admiration, the traces of thy power, thy wisdom and thy goodness; and on every hand rich presents exhort us to tender fresh acknowledgments, while our charmed eves are feasted on the additional evidence, on the new monuments of thy benevolence and thy grace!

No month in the year gives us so many delightful objects, the images of God's loving-kindness and power, as that on which we now enter. The infinite variety of hues which diversify the fields, and thousands of flowers, which enamel the gardens, blending colours so beautiful, that Solomon in all his glory could not equal them in the magnificence of his array; the whole atmosphere filled with fragrance, the fresh and glowing verdure of the forest, the mirthful boundings and joyful cries of animals in the meadows; but more than these, the delightful harmony of the birds, all join to impart pleasure, and to wake feelings of devotion in the contem-

plative mind.

That mortal who desires to be with God, will desire to study God in his works. He feels that he has something more to go upon than his own imaginings, however fertile his mind may be. Can the noblest altar, erected by human art, equal the majestic dignity of the mountain, or the living brightness of the transparent spring which issues from its side? How weakly have the devotees of former days, and indeed of our own, withdrawn themselves from contemplation of

such objects, to enclose themselves within stone wells to a cloister's shade. When can the mind hope to gain a happier tone, a nobler elevation, than when in early spring it rejoices in the magnificence of nature?

How sublimely, Oh Lord! dost thou deign to speak to us through the bursting foliage, or the melody of the nightingale! Can we fail to respond with the liveliest emotions of gratitude? When we behold these things ordained by thee, to minister to man's enjoyment, all doubt of thy love flies from our bosoms, and we can no longer fear that we have been mistaken. Such magnificent presents from thy hand, prove not merely that it was thy pleasure man should live, but that it is

thy design he should live happily.

That we should ever have doubted this: that we should for a moment have proved wanting in gratitude, we deeply regret. Such dull insensibility shall be ours no longer; but even the blessed assurance we now have of thy goodness, will be of little avail, if the joy we experience does not show itself in holy exercises, and virtuous deeds. When then we look around us on that rich and beautiful scene, in which we find ourselves placed, which is for us so gloriously arrayed, while we feel in some measure lifted above our former insignificance, being the objects of such care, we will approach thee with thankful hearts, but still with fear and deep humility, prizing thy smile above all things the eye can look upon, or the mind imagine. Blessed as we are in this delightful season, we will enjoy it in all its magnificence, but with a constant reference to thee, while we cherish the exhiliarating thought, that if this earth, touched by hand, can exhibit such gorgeous splendour, how superb, how blissful must that heaven be, which is reserved for those who fulfil their duty as zealous Christians, as followers of Jesus, and as faithful worshippers of God!

THE ALMIGHTY ACCESSIBLE TO MAN IN SOLITUDE.

Though a wilderness be not heaven, it shall be sweet and welcome for the sake of heaven, if from thence I may but have a clearer prospect of heaven; and if, by retiring from the crowd and noise of folly, I may but be better disposed to converse above, and to use, alas! my too weak and languid faith, till it be exchanged for the beatific vision. May there but be more of God, readier access to him, more flaming love, more heart-comforting intimations of his favour, in a wilderness than in a city, in a prison than in a palace; let that wilderness be my city, and that prison be my palace, as long as I abide on earth. If, in solitude, I may have Enoch's walk with God I shall in due season have such a translation as will bring me to the same felicity which he enjoys; and in the mean time, as well as after, it is no disadvantage, if by

mortal eyes I am seen no more. If the chariot of contemplation will, in solitude, raise me to more believing, affectionate converse with heaven, than I could expect in tumults and temptations, it shall reconcile me to solitude, and make it my paradise on earth, till angels, instead of Elijah's chariot, shall convey me to the presence of my glorified Jesus.

Is it grievous to you to be alone, because you have been used to much company?—Consider, that company may so abuse you, that it may be more grievous to you not to be alone. You will not wish for the society of wasps and serpents; and even bees have such stings, that their honey may

be bought too dear.

But can you say you are alone, while you are with God?—Is his presence nothing to you? Does it not signify more than the company of all the men in the world? There can be no want of man when we can speak with God. And were it not that God is here revealed to us in a glass, and that we are conversing with God in man, human converse would be of little worth. If you suggest, that solitude is disconsonant to a sociable mind; think again, that the most desirable society is no solitude. If God be nothing to you, you are not a Christian, but an atheist. If God be God to you, he is your all in all; and then should not his presence be instead of all?

O that I might get one step nearer to God, though I receded many from all the world! O that I could find that place on earth, where a soul may have nearest access to him, and the fullest knowledge and enjoyment of him, though I never more saw the face of friends!—On these terms I should cheerfully say, with my blessed Saviour, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me;" and not without having the best reasons to assign for saying so. For if God be with me, the Maker, Ruler, and disposer of all things is with me: he is with me to whom I am absolutely devoted; who loves me best; whose love is more to me than the love of all my friends in the world—with whom my greatest business lies; with whom I may converse without reserve or interruption; and with whom I must live for ever.

If God be with me, the Maker, Ruler, and Disposer of all things is with me. So that in him all things are virtually with me. I have that in gold and jewels which I seem to want in silver, lead, and dross. I can want no friend, if God vouchsafes to be my friend. I can enjoy no friend if God be my enemy. If God be reconciled unto me, I need not fear the greatest enemy. I shall not miss the light of a candle, if I have this blessed Sun.

Baxter.

## MORNING.—MAY 2.

TO KNOW GOD IS BLISS.

I know that my Redeemer lives, And ever prays for me: A token of his love He gives, A pledge of liberty.

I find Him lifting up my head, He brings salvation near; His presence makes me free indeed, And He will soon appear.

He wills that I should holy be!
What can withstand his will?
The counsel of his grace in me
He surely shall fulfil.

The love of Christ I long to find, In all its depth and height; To comprehend the Eternal mind, And grasp the Infinite.

When God is mine, and I am his Of paradise possess'd, I taste unutterable bliss, And everlasting rest.

Wesley.

LOVE MERCY, AND WALK HUMBLY BEFORE GOD. MICAB. VI.

1 Hear ye now what the Lord saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

2 Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.

3 O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.

4 For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

5 O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.

6 ¶ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with

burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

 $8\,$  He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

#### GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN, CONSTANTLY MANIFESTED

Even in this imperfect state of being, man is the object of God's especial care. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered," we read in scripture; and this should ever be a word of comfort, well calculated under the weight of all our cares to contribute to our peace of mind. To possess the conviction that an invisible being watches over us; to provide for our wants; to protect us from danger; and to know that being infinite in wisdom, he is at the same time omnipotent, may reasonably inspire in our bosoms a confidence which nothing can shake. helpless would our condition be without that firm and immovable faith, in a wise and benign Providence, which is happily ours. We know there is a God who ordained that we should live, who governs our fate, and has numbered our days; who will never cease to make us the objects of his care, and who will confer blessings on us even in the tribulations which may overtake us. This persuasion is the Christian's stay and support: without it he could know no real peace of

mind-no happiness below.

Often while journeying through life, our days are overcast. It is the pleasure of the Lord to hide himself from us, and his terrifying dispensations are well calculated to fill the beholders with alarm. Yet notwithstanding these, his faithful worshipper, whose faith has been proved, will not tremble with unmanly apprehension in anticipa-tion of evils to come. The varieties we are to know, are pictured to us in the changing seasons of the year. In every winter we find that the Lord hides his face for a time, but a few months passed a way, all nature awakes to a new and joyous existence; thus giving us in each succeeding year, a pledge of the great Creator's love, and constant watchfulness over the well-being of his world. Of his love and grace, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night uttereth knowledge," that the Lord does not forsake us, or in aught neglect his charge.

Greatly should we sin against heaven and ourselves, if we did not draw fresh courage, and increasing confidence from this source of comfort and hope, which the great Jehovah himself has opened to our eyes, and if we did not rejoice in those wise dispensations by which he increases our enjoyments in this world, and gives our hearts repose. Since he has mercifully instructed us in his will, Oh! may we never overlook that to which he is plead to direct our serious attention! On the one hand we will not advance towards life's goal with reckless indifference, and in careless security; nor on the other will we deny our God by yielding to weak, fretful despondency, and unreasoning fears. We desire, as a loving and dutiful child confides in a kind and affectionate father, to repose with perfect confidence on the promises and bounty of our Lord, to obey all his commandments, and to know no solicitude, but to render ourselves more and more worthy of his benevolent support, by a faithful discharge of the duties which may be committed to our care, and by manifesting, at the same time, zeal to honour him, and generous anxiety to benefit our fellow creatures.

Should a period arrive in which it may seem that he has altogether withdrawn from us the light of his countenance, never let us despair, but like Job, in his painful trials, remain firm to principle, and say, "till our end approaches, we will not desist from hope.

May we, assisted by celestial goodness, be enabled to make that blessed tranquillity which we seek to gain, our own, through all the vicissitudes of life we may be destined to experience, and under all the various attacks which we have to sustain. There is nothing that ought to make us waver or distrust our Creator, in the midst of trouble and general disorder, with threatening misery impending. Even though the bolt should fall, our bosoms will remain calm, because our trust is in God, and we know in whom we trust. We shall then submit with patience to that affliction which it may be his pleasure we should endure, and enjoy with gratitude, the good which his relenting love may send.

At the present moment we have reason to congratulate ourselves, that we have the advantage of being free from many of the doubts and distressing perplexities which others have to lament. We know the goodness of the Deity we worship, and that enables us to enjoy what he gives us now, and to look forward to a future state of being without dismay. Continue thy mercies to us, Oh God, and render us more worthy of thy gracious Providence! There is no winter but it in due time is followed by a spring, so will we rest assured that we can know no sorrow, which will not eventually experience blessed relief. This thought shall be constantly with us, and thy servants will evermore live in hope.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS SEEN IN THE SUFFERINGS OF JESUS.

Attend to the description given by Saint Paul of the subject matter of the gospel. It revealed the righteousness of God-not, they would observe, his forbearance, his mercy, his love, which they might rather have fixed upon as the characteristics of the gospel; but his righteousness, his justice, his inflexible justice in the uncompromising adherence to his holy and righteous law, as the fixed rule in the moral government of his creatures. These were attributes which might be looked upon as manifestations in the law rather than in the gospel, to be the thunders issuing from Mount Sinai rather than "good tidings" from the peaceful hill of Zion. Upon consideration, however, the propriety of it would be shown. For where in all dispensations was the righteousness of God so conspicuously manifested, as in the scheme of our redemption? Where so truly his hatred of sin and his resolve to visit iniquity manifested, as in the sacrifice for sin made in the person of his only begotten son on the cross? were asked where was the holiness of God-where his spotless purity, and his insurmountable hatred of all sin? were they not most awfully displayed in the garden of Gethsemane and on the mount of Calvary? What language could they select to express it more forcibly than the very words of the victim fainting beneath the load of the world's sin, confessing in his agony that his "soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" beseeching his righteous Father with strong cries that "if possible the bitter cup might pass from him?" But this being impossible, committing himself without a struggle into the hands of justice, but not without the doleful cry of "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Oh, if ever Jehovah's righteousness was made manifest, surely it was in that awful moment when he was seen pouring out the vial of his wrath upon the head of his unoffending son, as the representative of sinners. The gospel, wherever preached, revealed this righteousness of God, only with this blessed peculiarity-his righteousness not in punishing sin but in pardoning sin. His righteousness in pardoning sin, because having punished that in the person of our surety, the same attribute of Justice which exacted the penalty remitted it to the utmost for those for whom it was paid. The apostle St. John says, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins;" nay, more, not only was the punishment remitted for those for whom Christ died, but the reward of righteousness promised, and in due time actually bestowed. The sinner was not only pardoned but admitted to favour. It was not enough that the prodigal was not repulsed, but the father ran forward to meet him-fell on his neck and kissed him; and killed the fatted calf, and clothed him with the best robe; thus representing the sinner as being taken back to his heavenly Father's bosom, admitted as a son, made a heir of God and a joint heir with Christ-and all through the righteousness of God indicated by the obedience and suffering of his coequal son, and glorified in the full and everlasting salvation of those interested in them .- Report of Dr. Hudson's Sermon at the Consecration of Christ Church, Clifton Park, Oct. 8, 1844.

## EVENING .-- MAY 2.

GOD'S GUIDANCE NECESSARY TO MAN'S PEACE.

God of the morning, at whose voice The cheerful sun makes haste to rise And like a giant doth rejoice To run his journey through the skies.

From the fair chambers of the east The circuit of his race begins, And without weariness or rest Round the whole earth he flies and shines.

O like the sun may I fulfil Th' appointed duties of the day With ready mind and active will March on and keep my heavenly way.

[But I shall rove and lose the race, If God my sun should disappear, And leave me in this world's wild maze, To follow every wand'ring star.]

Lord, thy commands are clear and pure, Enlightning our beclouded eyes, Thy threatnings just, thy promise sure, Thy gospel makes the simple wise.

Give me thy counsels for my guide, And then receive me to thy bliss; All my desires and hopes beside Are faint and cold, compared with this. ANIMALS AS WELL AS MAN CREATED BY GOD.

7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

19 And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field:

## MAN HAS DUTIES TO PERFORM TO THE INFERIOR ANIMALS.

In the wonderful history of the creation we read—" And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so." When we contemplate this, does it not follow that the Lord who created all these millions of animals, must unquestionably have intended them for some particular and distinct object? and as this is clear to our understanding, it therefore ought not to be with us a matter of indifference how we act towards them. Unmindful of our duty in this respect, it may be that many of us have much to answer for. Among Christians there are not a few who from their conduct, appear to have come to the conclusion that, with regard to animals, they have no duties to perform.

Such a feeling ought not to prevail. power over the brute creation is great, but we ought not to take up the idea that we are not responsible for its proper exercise. It is given to us to reign over them; we may consume them to sustain ourselves; we are to use them to promote our own ease and pleasure, and to destroy such as are, in any way, dangerous to our lives, or which interfere with our means of subsistence. If for purposes other than these we abuse the power we possess, and in wantonness torture the beings entrusted to our keeping, we commit a serious offence against the giver of all good. The animal kingdom is intended to develope our knowledge of the Creator, and to teach us at once to fear and to glorify him. Each animal as a

Wutts.

creature, as a messenger from God, deserves some consideration from man. We are not to imagine ourselves permitted to crush beneath our feet every little creature that approaches them. The blood of these, the sap and support of their lives, was meted out by the same God who called us from the dust. How seriously reprehensible is that folly which would crush or torture these exquisitely constructed beings, and deem it amusement! Can it add to the dignity of man to pass through the garden or the field, dreaded as a pestilence by

the smaller objects in creation?

These little sufferers have their sorrows. On yonder tree a bird is sitting in melancholy silence, or is occasionally moving backwards and forwards, and mournfully pouring forth her wild but touching lament. That is a mother, whose ingeniously built nest has been plundered. The eggs deposited within it have been seized, or worse still, her young ones carried away. In the path before us, there is seen a writhing worm. A human foot has cruelly crushed, without destroying it. Further on, the wings of a butterfly appear,-the powder rubbed off, and left in the hands of a child, to whom the beautiful flutterer had been given as a plaything, as a fond tigress might offer a bleating lamb for the gratification of her cubs. Oh men! careless and cruel!-were animals possessed of reason, they would shun you like demons, and you would walk in solitude through your gardens and copses, like a forsaken tyrant, through the dreary corridors of his dreaded abode.

That man has a right to appropriate to himself the smaller animals, is not denied; but in using that right, let it be exercised with tenderness and mercy. Is the butterfly to die on account of his brood-the earwig, or the toad, from their being erroneously considered dangerous-the sparrow, because he consumes your produce? Kill them; but kill them so that they may experience as little agony as possible; and ever teach your children to commiserate the throes of an animal struggling in pain. God beholds the sufferings of his tortured creature, and cannot regard with favour those who wilfully inflict intolerable pain. To carry back a fish, or a strayed animal, to its natural element or home, is better than the finest panegyric we can pronounce upon our own humanity.

In some parts of the world, much more regard is had to the feelings of animals, and their preservation, than is common in Europe. The Turks are in the habit of buying birds for no other purpose than to give them their liberty; and the heathen Banjans, in India, never kill an animal. They even have an establishment in which noxious vermin are fed and protected. This is going too far; but, on the other hand, it may be justly feared that we do not go far enough, to evince a 'kindly feeling for the weaker or more diminutive creatures which have been formed by the hand of our Lord.

In the absence of wanton cruelty, and with the greatest care we can use, in the course of a summer, we must trample innumerable minute animals, sometimes whole tribes, beneath our feet.

Poor insects!—poor little fellow-creatures! Far be it from us to end prematurely your existence, the natural term of which would not extend to many days, by casting you beneath our feet, -to you, enormous, mountain-like masses. We would not desecrate the holiday of nature by wholesale insect-murder; on the contrary, we would rather sit and contemplate your little domestic government, mark your skilful management, admire your labours, your means, your sports, and your occupations. Nature's ample volume is full of the noblest instruction. Looking on these little creatures, we in truth admire, not them, but thee, O God! our common Creator and our Father. It is thine, Author of all! to live in thy works. In devout admiration of the wonders wrought by thy hand, we now, while all the creatures around us sleep, raise to thee our thoughts. Created in thy image, we desire that light may emanate from thee, to inform our minds on all points essential to the guiding of our steps for the time to come. Give us feeling and intelligence, not idly to mar the beauties of thy creation, or sportively to cause pain to sentient beings less powerful than ourselves. The mercy, the forbearance, the indulgence we crave from thee, we desire to extend to all objects beneath us, within our sphere of action; and with this sentiment in our hearts, tendering our warmest thanks for the many enjoyments we have known in the day now closed, we sink to rest.

#### WISDOM TAUGHT BY THE ANIMAL CREATION.

In fine, serene weather, cranes (like professing Christians, in a time of worldly sunshine) are not very observant of social ceremony; but will fly abroad, singly, without paying much attention to each other. The case is different, if necessity oblige them to make excursions under a louring sky, and to cut their way through boisterous, opposing winds. They then form themselves into regular companies, and fly in large flocks of triangular figure: whose sharp point moves foremost,

when they sail against the wind; in order that they may more easily penetrate the tempestuous air, and preserve their ranks unbroken. Sometimes, they will sleep all night on the ground. To prevent surprize, a competent number of them are stationed, by way of advanced guard to the camp, because of fear in the night. These, on the first approach of danger, sound the note of alarm; and the whole regiment starting from their slumbers, soar into the air without delay. Lest the sentinels should sleep, when they ought to watch, each stands (says Plutarch) on one leg, and grasps a stone in the claw of the other foot. The uneasiness of which situation has a tendency to keep them awake; and, if they happen to dose, the noise made by the falling of the stone, admonishes them to be less negligent. Let men learn of cranes, to be vigilant in their stations, and faithful to their trust. Above all, let ministers of Christ not sleep, as do others; but watch, as those that must give account of their stewardship to the Judge of quick and dead. It is said of Aristotle, that, lest he should impede his progress in his philosophical studies, by over-sleeping himself, he usually slept with one hand out of bed, and held a brass ball in it, over a vessel of the same metal: that the noise, which the ball must occasion when it fell from his hand, might awake him to what he deemed the principal business of human life. In how many respects may heathen diligence put Christian slothfulness to the blush!

The ant seems, of all others, to have been Plutarch's favourite insect. He even pronounces her a wise and virtuous animal; and, in my opinion, he proves his point. Friendship, fortitude, continency, patience, justice, and industry, are among the moral qualities which he deservedly places to her

account.

A company of these creatures (says this philosopher) visited a neighbouring ant-hill, carrying with them a dead ant, which evidently seemed to have been an inhabitant of the colony to which his remains were now conveyed. On the arrival of so many strangers, several emmets ascended from their holes, and, after a short communication, returned into the hill, to apprize the community below, of the business on which the unexpected visitants were come. After two or three passings and repassings in this manner, the negociation appeared to be finally settled. A deputation of ants, from within the hill, at last lugged up a worm from their under-ground stores, which the others accepted of; and, delivering the dead emmet to his friends, went away highly satisfied with the recompence they had received.

When a loaded ant is met by others which have no burden, they courteously stand on one side, or move another way, that they may not incommode an individual, who is toiling for the public good. . If a labouring ant is carrying or dragging an heavier load than she is well able to manage, this is no sooner perceived by the rest, than as many volunteers as are necessary run to her assistance, and cheerfully set their mouths or shoulders to the work. If the material be very cumbersome, and will conveniently admit of a partition, they will bite it into several pieces; and each moves homewards, with as much as he is able to carry. After their subterraneous magazines are sufficiently stored with provisions, they carefully select such as begin to putrify or decay; and, bringing them out to the surface of the hill, expose them to the air, or sun, until properly dried: taking care to turn them regularly, and to re-convey them into the common repository, on the appearance of rain, or at the approach of night. Lest their hoarded corn should germinate, and so defeat the purpose for which they lay it up, they carefully bite off those parts of the grain, from which the root strikes, and the blade

Plutareh's humanity does honour to his philosophy. He

laments the cruelty of those, who, for the sake of gratifying their own speculations, exceedingly distress, if not totally ruin, whole societies of these harmless and laborious insects, by digging up their hills.

Toplady.

## MORNING .-- MAY 3.

DEATH DIVESTED OF ITS TERRORS.

Death cannot make our souls afraid, If God be with us there; We may walk through her darkest shade, And never yield to fear.

I could renounce my all below
If my Creator bid,
And run if I were called to go,
And die as Moses did.

Might I but climb to Pisgah's top, And view the promised land, My flesh itself should long to drop, And pray for the command.

Clasp'd in my heavenly Father's arms, I would forget my breath, And lose my life among the charms Of so divine a death.

Watts.

#### PSALM XXXIX.

1 I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue.

4 Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

5 Behold, thou hast made my days us an hand breadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

6 Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth

not who shall gather them.

7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. 8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not

the reproach of the foolish.

9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou

didst it.

10 Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Sclah.

12 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go

hence, and be no more

PREPARE FOR THE FINAL ORDEAL.

The mind of man can imagine nothing more awful, nothing more momentous, than the sound of the last trumpet, which must summon man to his final ordeal; to hear the dread decision of his omniscient and almighty Judge: the fiat which lifts him to the regions of everlasting joy, or dooms him to an eternity of hopeless woe. That solemn sound is not faintly imaged to us by the admonishing call, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." We hear the voice of our Lord; it penetrates to our hearts; it so strongly recals the mercies we have known in by-gone days, that we feel humbled by the reflection induced, and stand self-accused of callousness and ingratitude, and fatuity, if we allow it now to pass unregarded. Its value hitherto has been but imperfectly appreciated. It has, indeed, been heard, and we have felt strongly affected by it for the time, but it has almost immediately been forgotten, and has speedily been obliterated by the cares and follies to which we have heen content to surrender ourselves.

Great has been our depravity. How frequently has ever-wakeful conscience heard thy voice, when, listening to thy holy word, O God! we have been struck by the power of thy spirit, and started from our mental sleep. Often hast thou called us back from the way of sin, by placing before us the sad examples of those miserable ones, who, suddenly arrested in the road on which they were journeying, have dearly paid by their sufferings for indulging in forbidden pleasures, and found themselves consigned to irrevocable ruin. How often has the monitor within warned us, by the horrors of a terrified conscience, and by that restlessness which they must ever prove, who know that their deeds are evil.

When we have approached the altar in thy temple, thy voice has not failed to remind us of the Redeemer, who died for us upon the cross, and of the vows which we learned to pronounce in the days of our youth. We have been still more alarmed when sickness confined us to a bed of pain, and with trembling alarm we believed, that the hour which should summon us to the presence of a justly-offended God, was at hand. Thy dispensations have thrilled our bosoms, and we have trembled at the thought of standing before thy tribunal.

But if the terrors of thy name, and of thy irresistible might have commanded our serious

attention, how irresistible, at times, have we felt the power of thy benefits! Thy hand has been graciously opened to bless us. From innumerable dangers it has been thy pleasure to preserve us, and thy loving-kindness has continued to invite us to come to thee. Such, O Lord! have been the instances of thy grace,—and how have we responded to them? With shame, with grief, we acknowledge, that with listless indifference we have coolly viewed such manifestations of divine goodness, and have deliberately abandoned ourselves to the distractions of the world, to calm the salutary emotion created in our bosoms, and stifle the voice of conscience.

It is hard to preserve that government and authority over our thoughts, which would keep them constantly awake to duty; but far from doing this, we feel that we have idly and deliberately encouraged them to recede from virtue. We have forfeited blessings of incalculable value, -blessings above all price, and have sinned against God, our brethren, and our own immortal souls. Oh! that man, gifted with reason as he is, should be capable of acting with such extravagant folly, as to degrade and lose himself, by refusing to obey the voice of his conscience, and the laws of his God! The heavens are silent, and the angels hide their faces, at thy command, Oh Lord! yet we have heard thy voice unmoved. We know that communion with our eternal Father must be the source of indescribable felicity. It constitutes the happiness of heaven, and must of necessity, where it is known, prove the greatest source of enjoyment on earth. The trial of religion which we have made for a few weeks or months, has brought full and perfect conviction of this. The blissful consciousness growing on the fulfilment of our duty, is better than any worldly treasure. Yet, unmindful of this, and regardless of the tremendous consequences of becoming the objects of our Creator's wrath, we have continued to sin as if we had nothing to hope for, and as if we were strangers

Forgive, forgive, O Lord! the blindness, the imbecility, which has thus caused us to go astray. Oh! let not thy awful retribution overtake us in our wanderings! Merciful God! snatch us not yet from life, but let thy warnings, thy chastisements, and above all, thy bounty, move us to act a better part, that we may, at length, wisely listen to thy voice, and so regulate our future conduct as not to incur thy displeasure

To obey shall be our constant ambition; our steps shall be evermore directed where thou orderest us to go. In all humility we desire to submit to what thy wisdom may ordain, and, bending all our thoughts to meet thy holy decrees, our hearts shall be constantly open to the influence of thy holy word. To that we will eagerly, attentively listen, and, doing so, we feel perfectly assured that, with the anxiety of sincere penitents, when we call upon thee to forgive the errors of our past life, and implore thee to guide us in the road we have still to journey, thou wilt not disdain to listen to our suit, and to soothe the broken and contrite heart, which, trusting in Christ, desires to elevate its every thought, and to consecrate all its powers, to the author of its being.

#### COMPARATIVE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

Our life seems short, when compared with the duration of many objects around us. The same sun, that now shines upon us, shone more than five thousand years ago upon our fathers. The moon, that enlivens our nights, has seen nearly two hundred generations of men rise and fall. Even the works of our own hands remain much longer than we. The pyramids of Egypt have defied the attacks of three thousand years, while their builders sunk perhaps under the burden of four score. Our houses stand, long after their transient proprietors are gone and their names forgotten. Where is now the head that planned, and the hands which built this house of God? They were all reduced to ashes five hundred years ago. The very seats we sit on have borne generations before they bore us, and will probably bear many after us. The remains of those who once occupied the places we now fill, are underneath our feet, and we must soon join them in their vaults to make room for other generations. Before another century has begun its course, these walls will resound with other voices, other feet will tread these courts, and another race of men will say of us, "Our fathers, where are they?"

How striking too does the shortness of life appear, when compared with the eternity of God! "Mine age is as nothing before thee," says the psalmist; nothing in comparison of thee. The existence of the Almighty never had a beginning, and can never have an end. "From everlasting to ever-lasting he is God." Compared with the eternity which he inhabits, the longest life shrinks into a mere point, a nothing. Indeed no duration of time, however long, will bear the comparison. Thousands and millions of years are no more here, than a day or an hour. If we take as many years as there are grains of sand upon the sea shore, and as many more as there are particles of dust in this huge globe of earth, and bring into one reckoning all these multitudes of years, the mighty sum bears no more proportion to eternity, than a moment, a twinkling of an eye bears to ten thousand ages. Such a calculation confounds the mind by its immensity; but the whole amount would be a mere point, yea, less than a point, in the reckoning of eternity.

We may see something also of the brevity of life, if we compare it, lastly, with the work we have to do. The eternity, which we have just been speaking of, is our own. When God gave us life, he made us heirs of it. The immense inheritance has been entailed upon every one of us, and we must spend it either in the height of happiness or in the depth of misery. Now the present life is given us to lay up a treasure for this eternity; to work out, by the power of divine grace, a salvation, which shall stretch itself through its countless ages. Great as this word is, multitudes of the human race have performed it. They have been strengthened by Christ, and, though utterly helpless in themselves, they have now obtained a treasure in eternity, with which the collected riches of a world cannot for one moment be compared. We ourselves also must work out this great salvation, and work it out too in this short life, or live for ever in hopeless misery.

Bradley.

## EVENING .-- MAY 3.

CHILDREN TO BE DIRECTED TO GOD.

Thus saith the mercy of the Lord,
I'll be a God to thee;
I'll bless thy numerous race, and they
Shall be a seed for me.

Abraham believed the promised grace, And gave his sons to God; But water seals the blessing now, That once was sealed with blood.

Thus Lydia sanctified her house. When she received the word; Thus the believing jailor gave His household to the Lord.

Thus later saints, Eternal King,
Thine ancient truth embrace;
To thee their infant offspring bring,
And humbly claim thy grace.

Watts.

THE LORD FORGETS NOT HIS COVENANT WITH THOSE WHO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. DEUT. VII.

9 Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him,

he will repay him to his face.

11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this

day, to do them.

12 ¶ Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers:

13 And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee.

# THE SINS OF THE FATHERS ARE VISITED ON THE CHILDREN.

The sins of men bring punishment not only on the offending individual, but on others. "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation," is the language ascribed to the Eternal in holy writ. That such is indeed his law, every day brings us convincing proofs. The young men we see bending early in life, beneath the infirmities of age; the sickly and miserably stunted beings, the slaves of avarice and ambition; and those wretched students of idleness who would rather starve than work, all give evidence of the enforcement of the law of the Lord, and all suffer for the guilt of their progenitors, because they tread in their footsteps, and have become the heirs of their sin. They live and move about, deplorable evidences of the recklessness and misconduct of those who went before them, the objects of horror, or of compassion; or they die while yet their days have been few, to accuse those who, by their misdeeds, have denied them the joys which they might have known in this life, as well as the opportunities of preparing themselves for a higher state of being, which a more lengthened existence here might have afforded.

Though stern the mandate under which they suffer, we ought not therefore to arraign the goodness of the Lord our God. It is not for the all-wise Creator to alter the laws by which from the first it was his will that the world should be governed. He is not to break through the order of nature, to screen the weak or the criminal, or to spare that progeny to whom they have

bequeathed the legacy of sin.

It would be foolish, it would be culpable, to rail against the dispensations of the Lord in this respect. Far be the thought from us. It is not to be indulged; but we may, nevertheless, sincerely commiserate the lot of those unfortunate ones who suffer for the crimes committed by their parents, while we offer to our Maker our humblest thanks, that we are not of the number.

And this thought brings us to reflect on the duties which devolve upon us, looking forward to the well-being of our posterity. We ought not to exist for ourselves alone, but also for those whom we are to leave behind. It is for us, by our holy lives, to furnish them with an impressive exhortation to piety, faith, and benevolence, and to noble self-denial, to promote the welfare of a brother. Let us never cease to feel that the dear ones whom the Lord has trusted to our guiding and instruction, whom he has united with us by the bonds of relationship, whom he has made the witnesses of our conduct, the assistants

of our pilgrimage, and the sharers in our cares and comforts, have all a right to expect from us, as a duty to them, that we shall conscientiously, by a prudent line of conduct, take care of our bodies, as well as our souls. We may become their benefactors, or we may become their ruin; it is for us to bequeath to them a blessing or a curse.

Since such is the awfully interesting post assigned to us, Oh! that when we shall have ceased to be inhabitants of this world, our memories may become to those who succeed to our position, as a beacon to guide them on their way, an impulse for conscientious fidelity, for animated gratitude, for active benevolence, undoubting confidence in God, and perfect resignation to his The thought is ennobling. How beautiful the idea, that even when in the grave, we shall continue living and active, in the minds of those we love, and even in the blessings breathed for them, after they in their turn shall have departed. Contrasted with this heart-cheering thought, let us for a moment place the reflection, that he who is forgetful of his Creator, delivers over those nearest to him to God's punishment, and at once lays the foundation of their temporal ruin, and everlasting misery. How dreadful must his responsibility be, how terrible must his fate eventually prove, who thus prepares the way for the destruction of his children! Gracious God and Father! grant that we may succeed in rendering ourselves, by thy aid, blessed examples to ours, while we live, and also a blessing to them when we are on earth no more, in beneficially admonishing our successors, while they walk by the mound which indicates the tomb to which our mortal remains have been consigned.

## EXAMPLE TRAINS YOUNG MINDS TO DUTY.—TRUTH

The mind of man must be cared for, equally with the body; and it is as needful to apparel the one, as it is to clothe the other. Nature perfects the brute, but man is made by art. And so it was said by one of the old philosophers, that we are born but animals; it is knowledge and education, which make us men. It is true, that reason is intimately mixed up with our very nature; but so in the vegetable world, flowers and fruits lie latent in the several seeds; yet if these are laid in barren soil, or be neglected in their growth, they will come to nothing. It is just so with the mind.

All our knowledge is acquired. It has been the good pleasure of him who made us, simply to give us faculties and capacities, committing us in other respects to our own guidance and industry. We are capable of speaking divers languages; but if left to ourselves, we should pour forth nothing but confused and inarticulate noises. We may attain to many wonderful arts and sciences; but had we no

teaching, we should (in the language of Job) continue as we were born, "like the wild ass's colt," as illiterate and almost

as stupid.

It would be idle to refer to authorities, since all who consult them know, that however they may disagree in some particulars, they unanimously recommend and enforce education, as a sacred duty, devolving on men of every country and class, towards the young. Wise men in every country and age have marked out the road, the same to individuals and nations, to all that is truly good and great-and that is education. "The inquiry of truth," observes Lord Bacon, "which is the love-making or wooing of it,-the knowledge of truth, which is the possession of it, -and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it,-constitute the sovereign good of human nature -certainly it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of And says the great and good John Locke, who was in mental philosophy what his friend Sir Isaac Newton was in physical, "I think I may say, that, of all the men we meet with, nine parts in ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is that which makes the great difference in mankind." But a sacred writer uses language yet clearer and stronger, in which the promise is declared to be as certain as the precept,-" Train up a child," says Solomon, "in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Dr. Edwards.

## MORNING.—MAY 4.

He that hath made his refuge God, Shall find a most secure abode; Shall walk all day beneath his shade, And there at night shall rest his head.

Just as a hen protects her brood From birds of prey that seek their blood, Under her feathers; so the Lord Makes his own arm his people's guard.

Thrice happy man! thy Maker's care Shall keep thee from a fowler's snare—Satan, the fowler, who betrays Unguarded souls a thousand ways.

What though a thousand at thy side, At thy right hand ten thousand died, Thy God his chosen people saves, Amongst the dead, amidst the graves.

Golden Treasury.

HOLINESS AND LOVE. EPHESIANS, IV.

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
23 And be renewed in the spirit of your minds;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun co down upon your wrath.

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it

may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to anotehr, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

# THE MADNESS OF RISKING ETERNAL HAPPINESS FOR WORLDLY PLEASURES.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and you shall find rest unto your souls." It is thus that the Saviour of man invites those "who are weary and heavy laden, to seek him and find rest." The promise has not been made in vain, nor has our Lord been slow to make it good. Whoever obeys the kindly call, experiences that within himself, which assures him of its truth.

And who, let us ask, has sent this Christ, our blessed Redeemer, into the world? Who ordained that he should suffer on the cross, to effect man's salvation? From God the Father he came, from the mighty Lord of all. He who has no pleasure in man's suffering, or in his anxiety and doubt, sent the Comforter to give him permanent relief.

Oh! if such, as we are persuaded is the case, be his abounding mercy for us,—if God have so wisely arranged things for our benefit,-if he have made such vast concessions in our favour, that we may gain present comfort and eternal happiness, how madly depraved must we appear, should we spurn such bounty, and with obstinate blindness, advance in the road which leads to perdition! If we neglect this great boon, how can the error be repaired? Yet what would we not give in exchange, to save our souls, thus lost by persevering sin and folly, by a lust for worldly pleasure, and black ingratitude. The loss we contemplate can be made up to us by no worldly gain; once condemned, when we go hence. our fatal error is irreparable. No power on earth, no repentance, no humiliation can restore our peace of mind. Our wickedness we may deeply lament, but we shall lament in vain.

As rational beings, then, can we neglect to take care of our souls? When God has done so much for us, shall we resolve to do nothing for ourselves? From the duty of studying our own

welfare, shall we foolishly seek to escape? or shall we exert our best energies, and all that is within us, to give effect to the merciful disposition of our God?

It is our lot to live in a world which constantly tempts the senses, and surrounds us as we proceed with the most dangerous delusions. The various allurements, the glittering gifts which it holds out to lead our weakness astray, tend continually to encourage a neglect of sacred things, and endanger our claim to immortal peace. How necessary is it then, that we should summon up our resolution, and firmly, solemnly resolve, that nothing we can realize in this transitory state of being, shall gain such power over our hearts, as to win our thoughts from those meditations which tend to the ultimate benefit of our souls.

This is, indeed, essential to our real comfort here. How can we enjoy the very pleasures which court us, if our consciences be not clear—if we feel that momentary joy must be expiated by lasting misery? All the richest treasures of earth would be thrown away upon us, if the eternal spirit must pine in hopeless woe. In the words of our Lord, "What is man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?"

May we ever remember this, and be constantly on our guard.

Let the powerful arguments which the gifted advocates of the Christian faith have advanced to persuade their fellow-men to yield willing obedience to the law of God, sway our minds now and henceforth, so that we may be enabled to govern our passions, and to make all our thoughts, words, and actions, tend to a pious course of life. With this object in view, we must be incessantly on the watch against the tempter. In the day on which we are entering, artful snares will be found in our way, which, if not avoided, will destroy our peace, and endanger the future well-being of our souls. The lusts of the earth which move us, the bad examples we may look upon, and a passionate love of pleasure, may gain such power over our minds, that beneath their influence, what is most essential to our immortal part, may be forgotten; but grant, O blessed Redeemer! that this may not come to pass. Let thy grace be sent to our support, that we may not be found with the workers of iniquity. Let thy cross, the memorial of thy suffering in our cause, that we might obtain forgiveness of our sins, be constantly before us; let thy grace uphold and strengthen us, that we may resolutely strive against whatever is wicked;

let the prospect of heaven which thou hast opened to us, cheer and animate our weary spirits as we proceed, and ensure our salvation by encouraging us to remain faithful to the end.

THE REWARDS OF PIETY SURPASS ALL WORLDLY
ADVANTAGE.

When Captain David Gam fell in the battle of Agincourt, King Henry V. knighted him as he was expiring on the ground,—What are all earthly distinctions, but honours conferred on dying men?—And what superior glory does Christ confer on his expiring saints! He crowns them kings in the very article of death.

A good woman (Mrs. Whitby, of Columpton) said, when under great bodily pain, "God has an end to answer, by every afflicting dispensation; and, until God's end is answered,

I would not wish this affliction to be withdrawn.'

August 18, 1769. Dr. G— told me, that, some years ago, when he had been, for a long time together, under great darkness of soul, he was complaining to good Mr. Walker (of Truro), that "he could compare himself to nothing else, but to a raven, an unclean bird, bringing bread and flesh to God's people, without tasting any himself." To which Mr. Walker answered; "Be contented and thankful, that the Lord makes you a feeder of his heritage." "Ah, but," added the doctor, "it seems hard, to act merely as a cook, and serve up rich provision for others, while I myself am famishing." Mr. Walker rejoined, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

Mr. Fox, the martyrologist, tells us, of one Mr. Crow, an English seaman, who, being shipwrecked, lost all his property, and was obliged, when shifting for his own life, to throw what little money he had, which was five pounds, into the sea. But he would not part with his New Testament; and therefore, having tied it round his neck, he committed himself to a broken mast; on which, having floated for four days, he was at last discovered, and taken up alive; all the

rest of the ship's crew being drowned.

Some time since, I was reading of a good woman, who, being on her death-bed, was asked, whether she wished to live or die? "I desire," said she, "to have no wish about the matter; except it be, that the Lord may perform his own will." But, replied the person, which would you choose, it the Lord was to refer it to yourself? "Why truly," rejoined she, "I should, in that case, beg leave to refer it back to him again?"

Archbishop Williams once said to a friend of his, "I have passed through many places of honour and trust, both in church and state; more than any of my order in England, these seventy years before; yet, were I but assured, that by my preaching, I had converted but one soul to God, I should take therein more spiritual joy and comfort, than in all the honours and offices which have been bestowed upon me."

The old duke of Bedford (grandfather of the late duke) used to say, "I consider the prayers of God's ministers and

people, as the best walls round my house."

The late Dr. Grosvenor, being at the funeral of Dr. Watts, a friend said to him, "Well, Dr. Grosvenor, you have seen the end of Dr. Watts; and you will soon follow: what think you of death?" "Think of it," replied the doctor, "why, when death comes, I shall smile upon death, if God smiles upon me."

Toplady's Anecdotes.

## EVENING.—MAY 4.

WEAK FORGETFULNESS OF SINFUL MORTALS.

When my forgetful soul renews The favour of thy grace; My heart presumes I cannot lose The relish all my days.

But ere some fleeting hour is past, The flatt'ring word employs Some sensual bait to seize my taste, And to pollute my joys.

Then I repent and vex my soul. That I should leave thee so; Where will those wild affections roll, That let a Saviour go?

Show my forgetful feet the way That leads to joys on high; There knowledge grows without decay, And love shall never die.

Golden Treasury.

THE CHRISTIAN NOT TO CLAIM TOO HIGH A REWARD. MATTHEW XX.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? she saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall he given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with in-

dignation against the two brethren,

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and hey that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will

be great among you, let him be your minister:

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be vour servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

## PIETY SHOULD BE LOVED BY THE CHRISTIAN FOR ITSELF.

"If ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thanks have ye?" This searching question is asked by our Saviour. We must all feel that however carefully our conduct may be

regulated, however pious our lives, thanks we can never claim from God and Christ. Virtue is a duty. The exercise of it is beneficial to ourselves. How then can it deserve thanks? And what purity, what merit can there be in that piety which is only stimulated by the hope of reward? Our virtue ought to spring from a better source; from a love to our fellow-creatures, and from thankfulness to Christ.

If by honest conduct we only seek our present advancement, to live in comfort and to avoid slander; if successful, we have our reward in the world; though frequently the best, the most correct of the sons of men, are harshly judged by their fellows. A conscientious discharge of duty will often exact painful sacrifices, impose severe toil, and require to carry us through great firmness, patience, and fortitude. Too frequently we see those who commence life with virtuous intentions and seeming resolution, when they perceive the host of difficulties which they have to encounter, are discouraged and alarmed, and we find them shrink back, negligent of duty. Weak and frail is our virtue, at best, in this imperfect state of being; but it shall be the care of each of us to make our virtue take higher ground. Let the fear of God, the love of our fellow-creatures, and devout gratitude to our Lord and Saviour, be the bases on which we build our hopes. These, if our hearts are sincere in their aspirings to piety, will give us strength to do good; these are the true springs from which virtue flows, and the sure foundation on which alone peace of mind can stand.

We desire to preserve, in all circumstances, a consciousness of the presence of our Lord. Every breath that we draw, every new morning that opens on us, every blessing bestowed, shall furnish fresh instruments to our virtuous zeal, preclude the possibility of our regarding duty as a hardship, and reconcile us to any sacrifice that the faithful performance of it may demand. Safe, Oh! how safe, are the roads to God, by which the humble and unaffected Christian may proceed, till he reaches the Eternal presence. Christ, the august author, and founder of our faith, leads the way, and, treading in his footsteps, we cannot fail to reach our destination.

And from this, even if we desire to stand well with men, nothing ought to wean us. Professing the Christian faith, do we not expose ourselves to the scorn of every reflecting man, if we omit to live up to it; and ostentatiously placing ourselves in the ranks of the devout, continue in sin? In such a man there can be no truth. He must be despised as an impostor. Did he but believe the gospel as he would any credible story, if he were penetrated with a conviction, that lying, perjury, intemperance, and the neglect of God, will conduct the sinner to hell, as surely as murder and treason will to the scaffold, he would be effectually restrained.

Humbly we pray that our hearts may be found cleansed, and ennobled by the spirit of truth, and that nothing may separate us from thee, O God! We know, we feel, that the world, and all its treasures, cannot give us peace, if we are denied thy grace. To adhere to thee, and to obey thy laws, shall be our greatest joy. With this vow, most earnestly breathed, we conclude the day which thy goodness has last added to our mortal existence. May we conclude our lives with the blissful consciousness that it has never been forgotten, that it has not been pronounced in vain. Then shall we peacefully sink to the last sleep of nature, out of which we shall only awake to enjoy that blissful inheritance which thou hast promised and prepared for thy children in the regions of eternal peace. Satisfied that we have thus acted, how cheerfully shall we set our house in order, when thou mayest summon us from this life of probation, to obey the call.

Grant, O Lord, that we may possess understanding to adopt those thoughts, and cultivate those feelings, that may find favour in thy sight; that we may walk before thee in unpresuming piety; that our virtue may be disinterested, however confident the hope we cherish, that our ultimate reward will be great.

## THE SPIRITUAL JOY OF A CHRISTIAN.

The Christian will never be found to despise those pleasures, which are really innocent and rational. He is as much attached to them as other men; and draws from them a much greater degree of delight, than they afford to others. But then he can never think those amusements rational, which are adapted solely to the sensitive part of man, and many of which a brute may enjoy in common with himself. Neither can he deem those pleasures innocent, which directly oppose the precepts of his bible and his God: which have a tendency to excite those affections and lusts, that he has been commanded to crucify, and has solemnly promised and vowed to renounce; which are accommodated to the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; which have been applauded by all the foolish and wicked, and condemned by all the wise and pious, in every age of the church; which bring him into the society of the most profane and vicious, and separate him from the company of the most godly and virtuous of mankind; pleasures, from which he himself would tremble to be summoned to the judgment seat of a holy God.

As for the nature of his happiness, we may observe, further, that the Christian's song is a divine song. which fills his heart, descends from heaven, and comes down from the throne of God. It has its origin in things above the world, and is but little affected by the changes and chances of this mortal life. Poverty cannot silence the song, which it pours forth. It can sing the praises of its God as loudly and as sweetly in a prison and at midnight, on a bed of sickness and in the hour of death, as in the day of gladness and the hour of health. It must indeed seem strange and mysterious in its nature to the mere man of the world, for a stranger intermeddleth not with it. He has no capacity for receiving it or comprehending its nature. Even if he were taken to heaven, where this joy fills every heart, he would wonder at the happiness around him, deem himself in a strange and stupid place, and wish again for the vanities and pleasures of the world, which he had left.

To make this subject plain to us, let us take our bibles, and read the account, which is there given us of heaven. After seriously contemplating the glowing descriptions set before us, let us ask ourselves what ideas of heaven we have obtained. We think it a happy place perhaps, because we read that there will be no sorrow there, no crying, nor pain; but this is nearly all we have learned of it. Were we to be asked in what the positive happiness of heaven consists, we should find a difficulty in answering the question, and perhaps could give no answer whatever to it. Now if the bible had spoken of riches and honours in heaven, of houses and lands, of vain amusements and sensual delights, of the song and the dance, of festivity and mirth; in short, if the bible had exhibited to our view a Mahometan paradise, there would have been something tangible in the description, and we should have been able to form some conception of its happiness. Apply this observation to the subject before us. The Christian seems to be destitute of joy; and why? Not because he is really destitute of it, but because his joy is a divine, and not an earthly or a sensual joy. It is a joy of exactly the same nature, though inferior in degree, to that which reigns in heaven.

Bradley.

## MORNING.—MAY 5.

#### GOD'S TRIUMPH.

Hosannah to our conquering king!
The prince of darkness flies;
His troops rush headlong down to hell
Like lightning from the skies.

There, bound in chains, the lions roar; And fright the rescued sheep; But heavy bars confine their power And malice to the deep.

Hosannah to our conquering king!
All hail, incarnate love!
Ten thousand songs and glories wait
To crown thy head above.

Thy victories and thy deathless fame, Through the wide world shall run, And everlasting ages sing The triumphs thou hast won.

Golden Treasury.

SEEK THE LORD AND HE WILL BE FOUND. DEUT. IV.

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but

teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee.

24 For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous

29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; 31 (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not

forsake thee, neither destroy thee.

35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him.

36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth

beneath: there is none else.

40 Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever.

#### NO PEACE LIKE THAT ENJOYED BY THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

That our Creator is omnipotent, is our happi-"Thine is the kingdom, O Lord! and thou art exalted as head above all." Happy is it for us that such is our God. Were it not sowere we left to our own strength-did we not believe and put our trust in the mighty being who holds nature in his hands, regulates all mundane affairs, watches over his creatures, and governs every where by loving kindness-did we not know that this mighty Being is our God, how desolate would our bosoms feel! For us, wanting our God and Father, there would be no refuge in calamity, or danger; no guide amidst the ordinary perplexities of life; no rational enjoyment in days of prosperity; no consolation in those of adversity, and no hope in death. In the case supposed, all would seem to us a dreary void. How could we look up with joy and thankfulness, to hail the brightness of an opening day? How could we enter with cheerfulness and fond anticipation on a new portion of life, if we did not believe in the great Author of the universe, who made both heaven and earth?

But being armed with this faith, we can look forward with tranquil satisfaction to future days, and engage with alacrity on the duties which they may bring, while in the most critical situations in which we can be placed: thus supported, we shall remain serene in the hour of danger.

Do we for a moment experience alarm at the perils of the times, at the approach of the threatening hail-storm, at the roaring of the waters, or at the falling thunderbolt? Does the terrible conflagration burst out, or the destructive pestilence rage around: whatever may transpire to trouble or embarrass, we always find comfort

in flying to our Lord.

We are consoled, appealing to him, because we know that he can in a moment change the most threatening state of things-for nothing to him is impossible—to that which will assure us of safety and repose, Though the world itself should be destroyed, in thy keeping, we feel, Almighty Father, we should be safe, for thou, O God! art "the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever."

In those periods of strife, when persecution may be feared from the evil designs of wicked and degenerate men, God can hide us under the shadow of his wings, and frustrate the schemes which malice may have formed against our peace, He can save our mortal forms, as he has our immortal spirits, by the resurrection of Jesus.

Should poverty overtake us, should it be our fate to know severe distress, the Christian will still feel that it is the Lord who makes poor, and who makes rich; who wounds, and who heals. Those who suffer in the greatest poverty, his fiat can at once lift to affluence; and in any case, the burthen which infinite wisdom may impose, divine compassion will assist the faithful worshipper of our God to bear.

Should sickness assail, so seriously that our feeble nature finds itself engaged in a struggle with death, we still rise under the blessed influence of our trust in God, superior to fear. We rest assured, that God will not forsake us, if we do not forsake him; he will abate our sufferings, renew our failing courage, and rejoice our hearts with heavenly comfort. He will protect us to the end of our days, and when the last enemy shall have made his successful attack, the emancipated soul, called to God's eternal kingdom, will exclaim, "Oh death! where is thy sting?"

Thus happily placed, there is nothing that can occur which will seriously alarm, or long disturb

that blessed repose, which faith in God enables his devoted worshippers to enjoy. Our courage cannot fail, our whole soul being filled with him. His government, his merciful arrangements, his dispensations, give us assurance that we are his peculiar care.

Not to desire to honour a Being so great, so good, and so gracious to us, were inconceivable folly. But sin is of a stupifying nature, and renders men insensible to danger, however near—however tremendous it may be. Thus forgetting our duty, we become the foes of our own peace. Striving against God, we fight with our physician, and spurn the remedy which would relieve us from the anguish of sickness. Shall we weakly cease to strive for immortal happiness, and rush

upon everlasting ruin?

The ruler of the world is an infinitely good God, by whom we are loved; whose happiness, great and sublime as he is, consists in promoting the happiness of men. He knows all our wants, he will assist and protect us, though all the powers of the earth were leagued against our peace. Great as he is, he can regard with compassion the suffering of the least of his creatures. Honoured be his name. Hallelujah! Lord of all! He governs, and will gloriously execute all his decrees. Let us rejoice and be glad, and give him all honour. But the Lord knows only those who are his own; he blesses only those who fear him. Thine—thine, O Lord, we desire ever to be—thine we will be, and fear thee evermore. O, deign in thy infinite goodness to regard us with mercy, and grant us thy blessing.

#### GOD'S MYSTERIES INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO MAN.

We no more comprehend how we are able to lift up the finger when summoned by the will, than we do the motions of the celestial bodies. Each spire of grass, each grain of sand, each drop of water, every volition of the mind, every word we speak, and every move we make, every dust of the earth, and every inch of empty space—are associated with mystery. Who can tell how a tree grows from a seed, or a variegated and curious flower from a slip, without any diversity; how fragrance is emitted by the rose, honey extracted by the bee, or by what process any medicinal or poisonous plant exerts a restorative or destructive influence in the economy of animal life. Not one of us can go a step toward explaining how or by what power we masticate or digest our daily food, or in what manner it can contribute to the support of our life.

The most elaborate and the most successful inquirers in nature are everywhere embarrassed. We speculate, and generalize, and classify, and this is often all we can do. Certain effects, properties of external objects, are discovered, but their mutual relation and dependency we cannot perceive. One might as well attempt to dissect the morning mist. We detect various laws in operation, but we can go no further,

for if we dare to do so, our senses and our reason are alike We cannot give a clear, whole, satisfactory account of the causes, ends, and necessary adjuncts of any one thing in nature. We may be able to calculate an eclipse, but there are innumerable simple operations and events taking place around us, which disappoint our expectations; and means are employed to produce effects which seem to us unfit and inadequate. We can neither explain the reciprocal influence subsisting between the soul and the body, nor yet the influence, connection, and workings of the external bodies around us. We know not the laws by which famine, storms, and pestilence destroy mankind; how miracles could have been performed; why men are born in such places and times, and with such talents; and how it is that such and such trains of thought enter the mind; and though we may say they are accidental, we know at the same time there is no such thing as accident, as such a supposition must lead to atheism. Where there is the most beautiful harmony we behold nothing but confusion and contradiction. We seek the connecting links, the correspondent parts, but cannot find them.

Thus, then, the world within and the world without, appear as one undigested mass of materials, one unarranged chaos; we are every way bewildered in a maze of darkness, and may be justly likened, when regarded as intellectual creatures, to the mole, which by Boyle is supposed to possess the idea of light, though unable to comprehend the objects on which it shines. It is from this state of things that the school of sceptics, both ancient and modern, owe their origin and support. Seeing the abusurdity of confidence and conceit, they have run into the opposite extreme of universal Pyrrhonism, acknowledging nothing as certain, not even self-evident propositions. Our ignorance being so much more profound than our knowledge, and uncertainties being so far more numerous than certainties, they have been unable or unwilling to credit, or else have wholly lost sight of, those few verities which we can actually reach and grasp, like one that loses sight of a small streamlet in the vicinity and prospect of the vast ocean, or a man for

getting himself in the midst of a multitude.

Dr. Edwards

## EVENING.—MAY 5.

THE TROUBLED SOUL MUST WAIT FOR ITS CURE

Beside the gospel pool
Appointed for the poor,
From year to year, my helpless soul
Has waited for a cure.

How often have I seen
The healing waters move;
And others, round me, stepping in,
Their efficacy prove.

But my complaints remain, I feel the very same As full of guilt, and fear, and pain, As when at first I came.

Oh would the Lord appear My malady to heal; He knows how long I've languish'a nere, And what distress I feel.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

THE LORD TO BE SOUGHT IN PRAYER. PSALM LXIX.

1 Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my fuoa

2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

3 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine

eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.
5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are

not hid from thee.

6 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame

hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the

reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. 10 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that

was to my reproach.

11 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was

the song of the drunkards.

13 But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

## EVEN MAN'S DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES OFTEN COVER HIM WITH CONFUSION.

The Christian feels with sorrow that his best efforts at piety, fall far short of what is due to a benign and gracious all-protecting Deity. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." So we are told in scripture, and our own feelings confess that such is the truth, for what is the greatest number of our good works? one of us reckon up one good work for each day of his existence? But if we could, what would single good works amount to, by the side of the long series of errors; the countless transgressions of which we stand self-convicted? compared with all the deficiencies which we recognise in ourselves, when we reflect on the evil we have done, and on the good which we have neglected or omitted to perform? How many lost hours and misspent days rise in awful array, to accuse us before thee, our God, and our judge! Every hour that we have passed in listless indolence, or wasted in exalting our own merits, or in proclaiming the demerits of a neighbour; every hour in which we have been solely occupied with vain pleasures, or with seeking physical comforts, was taken from thee, for to thee it ought to have been consecrated: nor have we deserved that the life so badly appropriated, should be prolonged, as it has been by thy mercy, that we might act a better part, and so escape that perdition to which we must otherwise have been hurried by our own folly, and criminal forgetfulness of our duty and our God.

How weakly do we delude our reason, when we try to persuade ourselves that we have not gravely sinned against heaven! But let us for a moment entertain the idea that we are really what self-love would make us believe. Let us suppose that our virtues are numerous. This taken for granted. let our advocates stand forward, and claim for their recompense, eternal happiness in heaven. Alas! when we think of it, our best thoughts wither like fallen leaves at the close of the autumn, viewed by the light of the word of God, and seen by the eye of truth. The splendour in which we would fain array them, vanishes the moment we examine them, with severe impartiality, and compare them with what in our consciences, we feel was required of us, from the mind and powers bestowed by the Creator of the world. We can recal a day through which we acted with honesty and virtue; but did God will us to perform what was just in one day only? That could not be. Then why in every other day have we not conducted ourselves as we did in that which we so complacently remember? Unhappily, we have to deplore that the many days which we have weakly squandered away, or sinfully abused, stand forth as witnesses against us. True we assisted one poor man at a certain time, but there stood near him another man equally distressed, of whose case we took no notice, and ten others implored our charity, whom we made no effort to relieve. We see that where we have spent one pound in alms-giving to please our God. we have spent twenty times as much in luxuries to pamper ourselves, and twenty to that we might add, we have devoted to idle pleasures, under some specious excuse, which might save us from the censure of men.

One question, one searching question let each put to his heart, the question which we must one day be prepared to answer to the great Judge or all the earth, on the subject of our virtues. When it is asked why did each practise them? that is, was it in obedience to God's command, or was it

from self-love? will not each be constrained to admit that they chiefly grew on the latter? further asked, did they require any painful or extraordinary exertion? or did they naturally result from hearts formed as ours had been, or from an ambitious desire to gain such rewards as they were likely to win for us in our progress through the world? Were they practised with views directed towards heaven, or towards earth? The sad truth, when these questions are asked, cannot be concealed. Unprofitable servants that we are, even our good works, their ignoble motive laid bare, must cover us with confusion! Few indeed are there of the acts which we are inclined so to designate, that really merit the name. For the few which may appear, be all praise and glory to thy mercy; we owe them to the influence of thy Holy Spirit, Oh, gracious Saviour!

We know that he who humbleth himself before thee, shall be exalted. Therefore let us be watchful, lest our pride tempt us in any case to arrogate to ourselves what is due to the Lord Jesus. that we can offer to our Maker, is of very little account. Even our present devotional attempts deserve the character of virtue, only so far as they proceed from hearts warmed with gratitude, and sincerely penitent for the sins of other days. When our repentant sighs ascend to heaven, it is for our unfailing friend and constant advocate, to gain for them attention. Deign then, Oh thou! who suffered for man, with continued love to move in our behalf, that the feeble and bewildered pilgrims, struggling through the stormy scenes of this life, may be cheered by the assurance, that the prayers they breathe will not be disregarded, and that mercy, benignly smiling on the desire we feel to render ourselves less unworthy the bounty of God, will cheer us on our road to the tomb, and eventually guide us to everlasting peace.

HOLY TENDENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES—WEAK NEGLECT OF THE WORD OF GOD.

If any man can produce a religion, that can reasonably pretend to an equal or a greater confirmation than the gospel hath; a religion, the precepts and promises and threatenings whereof are calculated to make men wiser and better, more temperate and more chaste, more meek and more patient; more kind and more just, than the laws and motives of Christianty are apt to make men; if any man can produce such a religion, I am ready to be of it. Let but any man shew me any book in the world, the doctrines whereof have the seal of such miracles, as the doctrine of the scriptures hath; a book which contains the heads of our duty so perfectly, and without the mixture of anything that is unreasonable, or vicinity of any ways unworthy of God; that commands us cverything in reason necessary to be done, and abridgeth

us of no lawful pleasure without offering us abundant recompense for our present self-denial; a book, the rules whereof, if they were practised, would make men more pious and devout; more holy and sober; more just and fair in their dealings; better friends and better neighbours; better magistrates and better subjects, and better in all relations; and which does offer to the understanding of men more powerful arguments to persuade them to be all this; let any man, I say, shew me such a book, and I will lay aside the scripture, and preach out of that.

And do we not all profess to be of this excellent religion, and to study and believe this holy book of the scriptures? But alas! who will believe that we do so, that shall look upon the actions and consider the lives of the greatest part of Christians? How grossly and openly do many of us contradict the plain precepts of the gospel, by our ungodliness and worldly lusts; by living intemperately or unjustly, or profanely in this present world? As if the grace of God, which brings salvation, had never appeared to us; as if we had never heard of heaven or hell, or believed not one word that the scripture says concerning them, as if we were in no expectation of the blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: whom God hath appointed to judge the world in righteousness, and who will bestow mighty rewards upon those who faithfully serve him, but will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us not then deceive ourselves by pretending to this excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, if we do not frame our lives according to it. For though we know these things never so well, yet we are not happy unless we do them—nay, we are but the more miserable for knowing them, if we do them not: therefore, it concerns every one of us, to consider seriously that we believe; and whether our belief of the Christian religion have its due effect upon our lives.

Tillotson

## MORNING.—MAY 6.

INFINITUDE OF GOD'S MERCY.

Say not that any crime of man
Was e'er too great to be forgiven;—
Can we within our little span
Engrasp the viewless winds of heaven?
Shall we attempt with puny force
To lash back ocean with a rod,
Arrest the planets in their course,
Or weigh the mercies of a God?

Our mercies, like ourselves, may be Small, finite, and ungracious ever, May spurn a brother's bended knee, But God forsakes the contrite never; Vast as Himself they shine above, To eyes that look through sorrow's tear; Great though the crime, great is the love, If those who seek it are sincere.

Mackay.

THE ALMIGHTY WILL PRESERVE THOSE WHO FORSAKE. BUT GUIDE THE FAITHFUL INTO PATHS OF PEACE. II KINGS, XXII.

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord.

10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saving, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan

read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah, a servant of the king's, saving,

13 Go ve, enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is

written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe, (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 ¶ And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God

of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.

20 Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace: and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

#### MAN'S VARIED WOES CHASED BY HEAVENLY HOPE.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below! To day tho' gales propitious blow, And peace soft gliding down the sky Lead love along, and harmony, To-morrow the gay scene deforms; Then all around The thunder's sound Rolls rattling on through heaven's profound, And down rush all the storms.

Ye days, that balmy influence shed. When sweet childhood, ever sprightly, In paths of pleasure sported lightly, Whither, ah whither are ye fled? Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way, O leave him not, 'midst tumult and dismay; For now youth's eminence he gains: But what a weary length of lingering toil remains

They shrink, they vanish into air, Now slander taints with pestilence the gale; And mingling cries assail, The wail of woe, and groan of grim despair. Lo, wizard envy from his serpent eye Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance; Pride smiling stern, and yellow jealousy, Frowning disdain, and haggard hate advance; Behold, amidst the dire array, Pale wither'd care, his giant-stature rears, And lo, his iron hand prepares To grasp its feeble prey.

Who now will guard bewilder'd youth Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage? Such war can virtue wage, Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of truth? Alas! full oft on guilt's victorious car, The spoils of virtue are in triumph borne; While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar, In long obscurity, oppress'd, forlorn, Resigns to tears her angel form. Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly? No friend, no shelter new is nigh, And onward rolls the storm.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along? Why shrink aghast the hostile throng? Lo, from amidst affliction's night, Hope bursts all radiant on the sight: Her words the troubled bosom soothe. "Why thus dismay'd? Though foes invade, Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid, Who tread the path of truth. 'Tis I, who smooth the rugged way, I. who close the eyes of sorrow, And with glad visions of to-morrow Repair the weary soul's decay. When death's cold touch thrills to the freezing heart, Dreams of heaven's opening glories I impart, Till the freed spirit springs on high

Dr. Beattie.

GOD'S MERCIFUL PROTECTION WILL NEVER BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE GOOD.

In rapture too severe for weak mortality."

"Thou art the same, and thy years shall know no end." These words are addressed to our God and Father, and how soothing, how consoling it is to learn that he, our protector and friend, can

know no decay. How often do we witness the desolation and woe produced in a mortal family, by the unexpected fall of its head, or chief supporter! Were this affliction extended on so vast a scale as it would be; could the world become fatherless, how indescribably sad would be our condition. Happily we may rejoice that we possess in our God a protector and guide, whom no time can enteeble; whom death can never remove, and who, unworthy as we may have rendered ourselves, will not cease to extend to us his love; who, notwithstanding the weakness and folly of our hearts, will not only assist us to bear affliction in the hour of tribulation, but will graciously strengthen us while we strive against sin. What, O Lord! would become of us, if thou wert not mighty within us, when we are most weak; if the influence of thy Holy Spirit did not create in us a will to do that which is good; if thou didst not raise our hopes, and renew our failing energies, by the words of thy promises, and the effects of thy grace?

To our hearts it is most cheering this day to feel, that thou wilt not refuse to endue us with strength to carry us through the last awful hour of probation, which may be even now at hand, so we neglect not to rely upon thee in holy con-

fidence.

Commending ourselves to thee; placing in thee, Oh God! our trust; satisfied that thou art wise, and that thy moral government of the world, imperfectly as we may at the moment comprehend the particular means by which thy will is accomplished, is that which is fittest; and that the very evils which, from time to time, we may have to deplore, are but the instruments of instruction, devised for our benefit by infinite wisdom; we are elated at the thought that thy spirit is not far off, while devoutly and sincerely we feel, that without thee, we are nothing. It is only by thy admonitions that we are upheld. Thy blessed assurances console; thy powerful arm supports. and thy continued countenance animates our hearts.

But confidently as we may trust to God's merciful and unfailing aid, we must still carefully guard against evil, and knowing how numerous and fatal are the temptations which beset the Christian in this life, our salvation is to be worked out with fear and trembling. It is for that purpose that the Creator of man has bestowed upon us the weapons of reason, faith and conscience, and with them the book of his holy word. To that end

the disposition we feel to repentance and confession, have been given; and also to that end the example of the Saviour and his holy servants, all Surely, if the mighty one have given us a reverence for his commandments, a desire of communicating with him, and a wish to be counted among those who are most devoted to his service, we are not too bold in viewing all these circumstances together as a token for good. We regard it as a proof that he is not indisposed to receive our homage, and that we are not wholly incapable of worthily attending to his ordinances. May the thought cheer and encourage us to proceed in our onward course, and in the right way. Our zealous exertions shall be directed to the working out of our salvation; and this day, and each succeeding day that we may know, it shall be our joy to feel persuaded that we are moving in that path which thou hast required thy faithful worshippers to pursue.

May the coming evening bear witness, that this, the sincere resolve of the morning, has not been lost sight of in the course of the day. When the solemn, silent, lonely hour of self-examination arrives, before we repose our heads on our pillows, we trust that we shall be enabled to look on the course we have pursued, with a satisfied

joyous mind.

This, our anxious wish, will assuredly be realised, if we carefully watch over our hearts, and mark the thoughts which arise in them, the thoughts which accuse and excuse each other, and labour to speed the work of our conversion with persevering earnestness, thus making ourselves, in some degree, worthy of the Saviour, by resolutely taking upon ourselves his cross, and sternly denying ourselves the vain deluding joys of folly.

We desire to forget the world, and to renounce whatever we have heretofore coveted in it, that we may readily submit to the will of God, and be found, at all times, faithful to our duty. Our hearts must become patient, serenely suffering hearts, which care not for earthly advancement; which set no price upon terrestrial happiness; which seeking only that which is divine, is carried forward by faith and love, to seek a home in heaven. This will fortify us against the ills of life, and enable us to brave its fiercest storms with unyielding courage, and collected dignity. The loss of earthly goods we shall bear with fortitude, and in circumstances of the greatest difficulty our bosoms will remain at peace, still exulting

over their joy in the Lord, and in their blessed communion with him. So our thoughts are thus governed and regulated, we shall never, in time or in eternity, lose the all-sufficient protection of our friend, our father, and our God.

## EVENING .-- MAY 6.

REJOICE IN GOD'S STRENGTH.

Sing to the Lord Jehovah's name, And in his strength rejoice; When his salvation is our theme. Exalted be our voice.

With thanks approach his awful sight, And psalms of honour sing; The Lord's a God of boundless might, The whole creation's king.

Let princes hear, let angels know, How mean their natures seem; Those Gods on high, and Gods below, When once compared with him.

Earth, with its caverns dark and deep, Lies in his spacious hand; He fix'd the seas what bounds to keep. And where the hills must stand.

Come, and with humble souls adore. Come, kneel before his face; O may the creatures of his pow'r Be children of his grace!

Watts.

## GOD'S MIGHT IRRESISTIBLE. JOB IX.

4 He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

5 Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

6 Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. 7 Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and

sealeth up the stars. 8 Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth

upon the waves of the sea. 9 Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the

chambers of the south.

10 Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number. 11 Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on

also, but I perceive him not. 12 Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

13 If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

GOD ADORABLE IN HIS WORKS.

The calm majesty of evening has again overshadowed the world. "Praise ve the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights; praise him all ye stars of light," we exclaim with the inspired Psalmist, in the midst of the silence which prevails. It were indeed difficult for a being gifted with reflection, to refrain from praising the Almighty at the view thus afforded to the sons of earth of his glory. While we lift our wondering eyes to gaze on the unclouded sky. with the mulitude of stars now shining upon us, how is the soul filled with the immeasurable vastness of space and time! Those glistening specks are celestial bodies; they are suns themselves, or worlds revolving round their several suns, as our planet revolves from year to year, round the great orb of light, which cheers our days with brightness, and brings cheerfulness and sustenance to the whole family of man. The stars to which our eyes are turned are dwelling places prepared for God's creatures, and are at once the witnesses and the monuments of his omnipotence and wisdom. Praise then the Lord from the heavens, praise him all ye stars of light. Were our views infinitely more confined than

they are, we should still know enough to feel that the Lord our God is entitled to all our adoration. Did we know of no orb but that on which we tread, and which has been appointed to be our present dwelling place, if we knew of no planet but this; of no sun but that which sheds his morning rays on our heads, and towards which that hemisphere which contains our abode again inclines, that the smile of spring may succeed to the dreary desolation of winter; even that, that alone would sufficiently proclaim the grandeur of the Eternal, to warm our bosoms with admiration, and to make us celebrate his loving-kindness; for how marvellous, how magnificent, is this vast globe, continuing to move on its axle with inconceivable rapidity, and which, though continued for thousands of years, knows no abatement of its speed, but proceeds, and with every succeeding twelve months, to traverse the orbit prepared for it. Were these things all we could know; all we could learn of the works of the first great cause, what an astounding instance of divine might, would that vigour which is never exhausted, and that fertility which is incessantly renewed, afford! Who can contemplate the re-

gulated velocity of the globe's motion, without

awe? Who can behold the unspeakable beauty and immense riches of nature which are recalled every spring, without admiration and gratitude!

These contemplated, to remain unmoved, would be brutal apathy, would be unpardonable indifference. We desire to acknowledge with thankful and joyous emotion, the evidences they afford of divine benevolence. But vain would be our joy, and brief our happiness, while walking under the blossom-bearing tree, breathing all the fragrance of balmy spring, if our souls were not elevated to dwell with sincere delight, and warm acknowledgments, on the doings of the great Saviour of all, to worship the Lord, and to praise his glory.

Oh Lord! to our watchful souls, the heavens shall declare thy glory, and the firmament shall show us thy handy-work. The wonders of creation shall teach us faith, love, and hope. Under thy gracious protection, we desire to place ourselves, and all that we can possess—all in which we can find an interest. Let thy power be exerted in our favour, and permit us to find a refuge beneath the shadow of thy wings. For us let thy grace be sufficient, and thy strength be proved perfect in our weakness. We desire never to forsake, never to deny, never to doubt thee; than so to offend, death to us appears less terrible. Be mercifully pleased to cause those corruptions to be rooted out of our hearts, which might cause us to wander, which might betray us into the hands of the enemy of our souls. Give us resolution to strive with all our might, with everything that opposes our advance towards heaven, and enable us "to set our faces like a flint," against all the assaults of earth and hell. Save us from malice and envy; let us never be ashamed to plead thy cause. Adoring thee ourselves, while our bosoms are warmed by the proofs of thy bounty which open upon us from hour to hour; let our feet hasten to our brethren, who may unconsciously slumber, that, roused to a sense of their danger, they also may seek with us the Lord of all, in his holiest temple, and find, and worship him in his works.

TRUE HAPPINESS, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONTRITE HEART.

The greatest happiness of a creature, is, not to have the creature for its happiness.

Dyer.

Enquire of saints yet militant on earth, wherein their hap-

piness consists? Their answer will be, "In having fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Again, could we ask those saints, whose spirits are now glorified and triumphant in heaven, what it is that renders their heaven so glorious, and their glory so incomprehensible? They would answer, that it is because they have now attained a complete enjoyment of that all-sufficient, all-satisfying, ever-blessed, and ever-blessing object, God in Christ.

Arrowsmith

If the very idea of having an hard heart, makes you tremble; it is a certain sign, that your heart is not hard.

St. Bernard.

Thy corrupt heart is like an ant's nest, on which, while the stone lieth, none of them appear; but, take off the stone, and stir them up but with the point of a straw, you will see what a swarm is there, and how lively they be. Just such a sight would thy heart afford thee, did the Lord but withdraw the restraint he has laid upon it, and suffer Satan to stir it up by temptation.

Boston.

up by temptation.

The heart of man is as passive in its first reception of God's image in regeneration, as the canvass, upon which a painter lays on his colours: nor is it more able to resist the operation of the agent.

Mr. Mogg.

"My heart," says David, "shews me the wickedness of the ungodly." As face answers to face in a glass; so the heart of man to man. When a believer considers the vileness of his own heart, by nature; he does not wonder so much that others fall, as that he himself is kept from falling.

Mr Madan

God hears the heart, though without words; but he never hears words, without the heart.

Bishop Hopkins.

All the angels in heaven cannot subdue the heart of a sinner. Heart-work is God's work. The great heart-maker must be the great heart-breaker.

\*\*Dyer.\*\*

There are some inns, which are never empty; but as fast as one guest goes out, another comes in. Such is the heart of an unregenerate man: as soon as one lust is served, another is calling for attendance.

Gurnall.

## MORNING.--MAY 7.

GRACE GIVES THE HEART REPOSE.

As o'er the past my memory strays,
Why heaves the secret sigh?
"Tis that I mourn departed days,
Still unprepared to die.

The world, and worldly things beloved, My anxious thoughts employed, And time unhallowed, unimproved, Presents a fearful void.

Yet Holy Father! wild despair, Chase from my labouring breast; Thy grace it is which prompts the prayer, That grace can do the rest.

My life's brief remnant all be thine:
And when thy sure decree
Bids me this fleeting breath resign,
O speed my soul to thee!

Bishop Middleton.

## THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOOD. PSALM I.

1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his

law doth he meditate day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the

wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but

the way of the ungodly shall perish.

## INESTIMABLE VALUE OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

A superior understanding, one deemed to be such by the sons of men, does not always conduct the possessor to the road which leads to heaven. In the plenitude of his self-sufficiency, man will sometimes undertake to reason on things which are obviously above human reason, as if the Omnipotent were bound by human laws, and could do no other than make his works such as must appear probable and reasonable to the apprehension of weak presuming mortals. When daringly arrogant thoughts come over us, let the words of scripture, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart: and lean not unto thine own understanding,"-"nor in thy might and thy goods, thy vigour and thy friends," each may add, and apostrophising his soul, say, "For behold thou seekest rest, and dost not find it by thyself, or thy own strength." Didst thou, let each ask himself, ever see a miser, who at all times, and under all circumstances, continued to rejoice in his treasures? Didst thou ever know any of the great of this world, who passed all their days in peace, without once being deceived; without feeling anxiety; without finding life a burthen? Can the man of wealth, or of title, speak authoritatively to the thunderstorm with effect, and say "thou shalt not strike me?" or to the foaming wave, "approach me not," and compel the affrighted waters to retire? Acknowledge then thy impotence. Thou mayest continue in appearance powerful, but still thou canst not command fortune to follow thee, nor misfortune to fly from thee. Wilt thou give command to the spring that it shall not pass away; bid the fragrance of the blooming rose to remain, instead of speedily vanishing? Thy word will not compel obedience, and thy voice will be

Oh! then abandon created raised in vain. things, and seek the Creator. With pious feelings, holy convictions, firm faith, and unaffected love, thou wilt find him, and he will listen to thee. Learn to bear whatever burden may oppress thee, and, Oh my soul! call upon thy God, and rely upon him with all thy heart. To this end solitude will greatly assist thee, if it be wisely used: if it be consecrated to pious aspirings; to devout exercises. Give not thyself therefore up to the distractions of the world, lest they blind and delude thy understanding. Like the Redeemer of the world, seek sometimes the advantage of withdrawing from the haunts of man, to gain that composure, which will enable thee to bear the trials of this life, courageously and firmly, and to derive from meditation, that wisdom which must teach modesty in all thine expectations, and remind thee that life is but a state of probation, or preparation for eternity, and that the Lord himself has arranged its sufferings, and its burthens, to prove and purify the hearts of men, and to wake in their souls a more animated longing after heavenly happiness. Consider then, Oh soul, how great the benefit of being godly. Learn, so far as this life is concerned, to be content with little; moderate thy wishes, and check those daring flights of imagination, those dangerous anticipations and hopes, which point but at human greatness. The last important change towards which thou art hastening, keep constantly in view, when thou must prove that no goods have really any value, but those which will administer comfort to thee in the hour of death, and that that which can alone assuage a dying pang, is a good conscience, and a firm belief in the mercy of God the Father, through the merits of his crucified son."

Let each thus commune with his soul, and he will gain true wisdom. He who often withdraws from the bustle of the world, to live in solitude with God and Christ, will easily find, and by grace be enabled to preserve, a good conscience; a treasure which will render him contented with his lot here, and happy in the contemplation of a blessed hereafter.

For those who weakly suffer themselves to be entangled in the snares of life, and who turn aside from holiness, they must eventually become the objects of Divine wrath, and be handed over to a terrible execution. How infinitely better would it have been for them, whatever their present possessions or renown, that they had in due time known the ways of righteousness, and

kept in mind the dreadful consequences of neglecting the future.

The Christian finds a good conscience, a shield to save him from danger, and a comforter to console for past sorrows, and remove apprehensions for the future. It enables him to enjoy life, by preparing him for death. It softens the pangs of the keenest misery, and saves us from overwhelming terror, in the last hours of our mortal existence.

Merciful and gracious Father, thy servants, now standing before thee, are deeply penetrated with the conviction, that neither for the day present, nor for what may remain to them of life, can they receive a greater boon from thy hand, than a good conscience, free from reproach. The fate ordained for us may be sad or otherwise; sooner or later death must terminate this scene; but whatever affliction may be reserved for us, grant us, O God, to enjoy that incomparable blessing, a good conscience!

FORGIVENESS OF SIN IN THE CHRISTIAN CAN ONLY BE GAINED BY REPENTANCE.

The love and tenderness, which God has for the believer, when in a state of justification, expresseth itself in a paternal displeasure, when he falls into sin, and hence come those chastisements and strokes of his rod, with which he visits them; and hence also those disquieting horrors of conscience, with which the faithful are sometimes agitated.

In brief, it is certain, the paternal love, and royal mercy of God for a believer fallen into some enormous crime, and those remains of communion, which the backslider yet has with Jesus Christ, only subsist upon assurance of the repentance and return of this rebellious child; so that it will always remain true, nothing is more opposite to the divine vocation than sin, as there is nothing more opposite to the life, and natural functions of the body, than the ravages of a burning malignant fever, which of itself tends to death, and which in the issue will certainly procure it, unless remedies be applied, or nature itself makes some extraordinary efforts.

This consideration leads us to a fourth, which condemns the foolish illusion of the greatest part of mankind, who imagine, they can join together uncleanness and holiness. On the one hand, they say, they can indulge their passions and sensual pleasures, if on the other they do some good works. They even pretend, that with the one they compensate for the other, and that their alms, their prayers, their fastings, and such exercises are of so much value before God, that on account of them he will take no notice of their sins.

The apostle strikes here at this vain and pernicious opinion, when, on the one hand, he says, without restriction or limitation, "God hath not called us to uncleanness," and on the other opposes sanctification against uncleanness, as two things which destroy each other, and which can never be associated together. The one is the state from which effectual calling takes us, the other is that to which it conducts us; the one is the kingdom of darkness whence the divine voice calls us, the other is the kingdom of marvellous light into which it introduces us

Nor are we to hope for any compensation on our part towards God. A thousand good works cannot expiate the guilt of the least sin, and one single sin would be more likely to destroy a thousand good works, than a thousand goods works would be to suspend the punishment of one single sin. You will ask, then, How are the sins, which we commit after calling, to be pardoned? I answer, If we could fully discharge our duty, we should commit none at all, because every sin is contrary to our vocation, and all produce bad effects in us: but as it is impossible for us in this life to attain this perfect sanctification, to which God calls us, there is only one way of having the sins pardoned, into which we fall, and this way is not by pretending to compound with God, by placing our sins on this side, and our duties on that; but only by an application by a lively faith to the blood of Jesus Christ, and to the mercy of God the father, and at the same time leaving off the course of our sins, and by mortifying them in ourselves by a sincere repentance. Sin, which has two lives, one in God, and the other in us, one in the remembrance and wrath of God, and the other in the love, which we have for it, cannot die in God (if I may be allowed so to express myself), that is, cannot be pardoned by his justice, till first it dies in us; till we renounce that unjust approbation, which we have had for it, and feel a hatred against it.

Claude.

## EVENING.—MAY 7.

WISDOM IMPLORED.

Almighty God, in humble prayer,
To thee our souls we lift;
Do thou our waiting minds prepare
For thy most needful gift.

We ask not golden streams of wealth Along our path to flow; We ask not undecaying health, Nor length of years below.

We ask not honours, which an hour May bring and take away; We ask not pleasure, pomp, and power, Lest we should go astray.

We ask for wisdom:—Lord impart
The knowledge how to live;
A wise and understanding heart
To all before thee give.

For we, like children, born in sin,
Know not, till thou hast taught,
How to go out, or how come in,
By word, or deed, or thought.

The young remember thee in youth, Before the evil days! The old be guided by thy truth In wisdom's pleasant ways!

Montgomery.

## WISDOM ABOVE ALL PRICE. JOB, XXVIII.

1 Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it.

2 Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of

ne stone

3 He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

4 The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men.

5 As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it

is turned up as it were fire.

6 The stones of it are the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.

7 There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the

vulture's eye hath not seen.

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

the mountains by the roots.

10 He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

11 He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.

12 But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding.

13 Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

14 The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me.

15 It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the

precious onyx, or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the chrystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

18 No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall

it be valued with pure gold.

20 Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place

of understanding?
21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept

close from the fowls of the air.

# THE IRRATIONAL PORTION OF CREATION TEEMS WITH INSTRUCTION FOR MAN.

Thinking man may often be instructed by inferior beings. The proud can learn from the humble, who have no reason. "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee," is the language of scripture. Obedient to the sacred admonition, let us turn our thoughts to the animals we find around us, and which are too frequently overlooked.

They well merit our attention. Can we behold them without being struck with their admirable construction, the force of their instincts, and the various faculties which it has been the will of

their Maker to give them. Mark the birds of passage. Absent from this part of the globe at that period when the rigour of winter would be severely felt, they annually return as soon as they can bear the temperature of our climate, and find sustenance. It is truly said in the Bible, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib." The elephant, the ape, the dog, and the beaver, are endowed with admirable powers, the peculiarities of each creature, and its situation. considered. The beast of prey finds his meat, and though surrounded by so many enemies, their race has still continued on the face of the earth, since it first appeared there, at the voice of the Lord, on the great day of creation. Man, though appointed master over all, has hardly proved himself to possess the power of extirpating one single genus of those creatures which he deems noxious and dangerous, and therefore constantly pursues. In regard to the doings of the minutest creatures, he is compelled to humble himself before the great Incomprehensible, by whose command numberless hosts of insects often destroy, in the course of a few hours, what man has planted and reared by the sweat of his brow, and the labour of many days.

And truly marvellous is the proportion of animals to the great household family of nature. Man attempts in vain, to penetrate the secrets of the Governor of the universe. He cannot understand why animals are so frequently seen, with unbridled rage, intent upon destroying those very things which appear most clearly to have been designed for the pleasure and nutrition of his rational creatures. It would almost seem as if God had designed to awaken in man, while looking on these puny destroyers of his works, a sense of his own insignificance, unaided by a superior power, and to teach his heart, too prone to be proud and deceitful, humility and sincerity. We might almost suppose that the Lord, by such dispensations, desired to intimate to men, that he had created the earth also for its humbler occupants, and that for their use the herbs spring from the soil, and the grass covers the fields, and various plants, delicious and nourishing to them, though unfit for human food, are ordained for their

benefit.

Blindly we frequently complain without cause, and make war on the defenceless beings about us, without provocation. "Ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee," often recurs to us most forcibly. We complain of the ravages committed by the

birds which visit the rising blade or the opening bud; vet, in many cases, it it has been proved, that the good done by these supposed destroyers of the farmer's hopes, so largely outweighs the evil, that, viewed in a proper light, they would be regarded as valuable servants, who, giving their work for their food, are content with very moderate payment, the importance of their services considered. They prey upon enemies infinitely more formidable to the expected crops; and the worm, working its way through the earth, is believed to more than earn its subsistence, as, by perforating the ground, he admits the air to penetrate masses in which he finds himself embedded, which are thus rendered fertile beyond what they could be rendered by any other process known to man.

But were it not so—were no immediate advantage to be found growing on the solution of nature's enigma, how foolish and ungrateful are we, to repine when clouds of insects descend on our blossoms, or multitudes of slugs assail our herbage! Even the loss thus inflicted becomes a benefit. It has a salutary object in view. If we became too rich by the never-diminished gifts of Providence, by uninterrupted abundance, our too evil-disposed spirits might grow proud, forget our dependant condition, and haughtily, disdainfully ask, "Who is the Lord?" We should esteem ourselves happy when spared that prosperity which would cause us to lose ourselves, and cease to look up to our God for support.

Join we, then, united as brethren in Christ, to admire the grand and beautifully-conceived arrangements of the Creator, who attends not only to the prayers of man, but also to the cry of the raven, and who has prepared food for the meanest creature that moves on the earth. Let us ever gratefully acknowledge that condescension on the part of the Most High, who has made known his will to mortals, and been pleased in such various manners to teach us his ways. Feeling this, the exulting exclamation of the Christian should be, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" To him we owe every thing. Nothing is there of all our eyes can look upon, which does not belong to His unfailing goodness, his everlasting grace, shall ever be our heart-gladdening hymn; nor, musing on these, can we ever grow weary of singing his praise.

#### WONDERFUL INSTINCT OF BIRDS.

Birds of passage are many; whose map is nature, and providence their pilot: as the stork (though it never visits our island) the crane, the quail, the woodcock. To which some add, the nightingale, the fieldfare, and the martin.

The quail comes to see us in April; the woodcock about October. Nobody need be told, that we treat those beauteous travellers very inhospitably. And yet, enough of them survive the sportsman's havoe, to return to the far countries from whence they came, and to preserve their species from extinction: that, notwithstanding our ill usage of them, they may continue to favour us with their company again.—Learn, from the amiable conduct of these gentle preachers, to be patient under affliction; to be meek, under every provocation; to be kind, even to the ungrateful; and to overcome evil with good.

The excellent Mr. Derham takes notice of two striking particulars, for which the conduct of migrating birds is remarkable: first, that these creatures "should know the proper times for their passage; and, secondly, that they should know, so exactly, how and which way to steer their course." To which we may add, the wonderful unanimity with which they assemble, and concert matters for their intended expeditions; the neat and regular order into which they dispose themselves, like a regiment of foot, or a squadron of horse, where each individual knows his place, and keeps to it; and the prudent secrecy, with which they set off, or rather steal their march, viz. in the night-time, when they are in the least danger of annoyance. Doubtless, the pretty itinerants have a common language, which they understand; a president of their council, who takes the lead in deliberative affairs; and a general, who, by mutual consent, heads each of the excursive legions, and superintends their flight, for the good of

Admirable are the works of the Creator! In wisdom has he made them all. The earth is full of his riches. Through him, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed time; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming. May our attendance on every mean of grace, and our attention to the regular discharge of every moral duty, be equally punctual and exact! Let us, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, set out, in affection, from earth to heaven, from self-righteousness to Christ, and from sin to holiness; like birds of passage, when they shift their clime. So, at death, shall we pass, like them, to a better country, from whence we shall never wish to return; and fly, not on the wings of eagles, but on the wings of angels, to Jesus, the Mediator of the covenant, and to the company of elect souls made perfect: there to be for ever with the Lord, and with each other.

Toplady.

## MORNING.—MAY 8.

OWN THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

Come, sound his praise abroad, And hymns of glory sing: Jehovah is the sov reign God, The universal King.

He form'd the deeps unknown;
He gave the seas their bound:
The watery worlds are all his own,
And all the solid ground.

Come, worship at his throne, Come, bow before the Lord, We are his works, and not our own, He formed us by his word.

To-day attend his voice. Nor dare provoke his rod; Come, like the people of his choice, And own your gracious God.

Watte

#### GOD'S POWER PROVED TO HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE. PSALM CVI.

1 Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can shew forth all his praise?

3 Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.

4 Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; 6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed

iniquity, we have done wickedly.

7 Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he

might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. 10 And he saved them from the hand of him that hated

them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. 11 And the waters covered their enemies: there was not

one of them left.

12 Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.

## RELIANCE ON THE GOODNESS OF THE DEITY ESSENTIAL TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

"It is a good thing that the heart be established by grace." These words of the apostle are so full of meaning, that we should do well to recall them at the opening of every day, in order deeply to impress the precept on our memory, that the purpose we have in view may be strengthened, and our minds rendered sufficiently strong to guard our hearts against wavering inconstancy. This is much to be desired, for a want of firmness frequently renders men unhappy, and exposes the faltering wanderer to consequences most awful to contemplate.

But in what respect, it may be asked, is it necessary that our hearts should become firm and steady? Before everything else it is desirable that they should be fixed in right principles. Though we may have found out many things which we felt persuaded were good, and thought we had made them our own, still do we find ourselves like reeds shaken by the wind. frequently allow ourselves to be prevailed upon to commit deeds which our better feelings would oppose, and often have we been faithless to sacred principles, from a wish to conciliate man's favour, or from a dread of his resentment. Excited by the prospect of profit, or enjoyment, or startled by the dread of toil and trouble, we have been deterred from going forward in the performance of duty. In the days and hours when, for wise purposes, we have been exposed to awful trials, how have we been unmanned by wild alarm. Where, in the excess of our terrors, was our trust in God? Alas! we have been found wanting in faith, and that honest undoubting confidence, in which we, long the objects of Divine mercy, ought never to have been deficient, has not been manifested, and Christian reliance in our God has been wanting.

More firmly ought we to be established in our good dispositions, and more command ought we to have over our feelings, that our exertions in the cause of piety and heaven may know no pause. As it is, the slightest invitation from some worldly companion, with whom we have been associated in our pilgrimage, will tempt us to abandon the right path; a slight opposition will make us reluctant to advance. Our noblest purposes are weakly abandoned, wiped as it were from memory, and we resign ourselves to listless inacti-Sometimes, when our sense of duty imposed a sacrifice or privation, or unusually severe toil, how our hearts died within us, and shrunk from the proper performances of our part? While professing our anxiety to shake off the infirmities and degrading selfishness of mortality, how incapable have we proved of commanding our feelings, and renouncing that short-sighted prudence which placed itself between us and Heaven. Deeply we lament, from us the humiliating confession is due, that our hearts possess little firmness, our virtue has been easily vanquished; in a word, we have been found wanting in piety, and proved that all our efforts at amendment had given us little moral value.

Thus have we found ourselves deficient in moments of difficulty, and not less have we failed in regard to the expectations, hopes, and anticipations of peace and mercy, which ought to have been firmly fixed in our hearts. For peace of mind; for favour from God; for temporal comfort, and eternal happiness, we have a right to solicit, with a full persuasion that our supplications will not be unheard. On firmness of mind, our all depends. How can we know tranquillity here, if we are not satisfied that God will order every thing for the best. To strengthen our minds, let us turn to the scriptures. There we shall find nourishing food for the soul, superior to all that the technical rules of modern art in composition could produce. In the Bible we discover the hand of God directing the changes in human affairs. There we see the proofs of God's love and impartiality, and of the equality of the whole human family in his sight. There we learn how essential is holiness, and that love which is the fulfilling of the law.

Reason should teach us, that agreeable to God we cannot render ourselves, if we do not shut our hearts against vain, and mean, and foolish wishes. Unless established with us the belief in our Lord's paternal government, and in the wisdom of his laws, what real confidence can we have in his goodness, or in his mercy? It is indispensable to our well-being that we should be firm in faith and in love, as, failing in those, we can never be strong against temptation.

Graciously deign, Almighty God, to assist us, thy servants, so that we may conquer the weakness and sinfulness of our inclinations, too long permitted to take their own course; that we may establish within our bosoms, most firmly, just convictions, good intentions, and blissful hopes. Aid our attempts so to regulate our minds that we may gain Christ, seeing he that has Christ in his heart is proof against the evil one. He may indeed be tempted by the enemy of man, but, sustained by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, he will not be vanquished in the fight.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS, SEEN IN A PROPER LIGHT, ARE MERCIES.

The design and intention of God in sending judgments upon a people, is to reclaim them from their sins. This indeed is the intention of all God's dispensations towards us in this world. The end of all his mercies and benefits, is to take us off from sin, and to oblige and win us to our duty; so the apostle tells us, Rom. ii, 4.—"That the design of God's goodness, and long-suffering, and forbearance towards us, is to lead us to repentance."

And this is the way wherein God delights to deal with us. The way of judgment and severity is that which he is more averse from, a course which he unwillingly takes with us, and not without some difficulty and reluctancy, "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the ohildren of men." And were it not that we are such perverse creatures as not to be wrought upon by kindness, so wild as not to be tamed by gentle usage, God would not handle us in any other way. It is our obstinacy and intractableness to the methods of his goodness which constraineth, and almost forceth him, against his incli-

nation, to take the rod into his hand, and to chastise us with it. He would draw us with the cords of love, and the bands of a man (as he expresseth himself in the prophet), but we will not follow him: and therefore we provoke him to turn these cords into whips, and to change the gentle methods of his kindness into ways of harshness and severity.

And yet when he comes to take this course with us, he still, like a kind and tender-hearted Father, aims at our benefit and advantage. He designs kindness to the sons of men by all those judgments which do not kill them, and cut them off from the opportunity and possibility of improving. If he send evils upon us, it is that thereby he may do us some greater good: If he afflict us, it is not because it is pleasant to him to deal harshly with us, but because it is profitable and necessary for us to be so dealt withal: and if at any time he embitter our lives by miseries and sufferings, it is because he is loth to see us perish in pleasant ways, and chooseth rather to be somewhat severe towards us, than suffer us to be utterly undone.

This Moses declares to have been the greatend of all the severe providences of God towards the people of Israel, in their long wandering in the wilderness, and all the difficulties and hardships they were there exercised withal for the space of forty years, Deut. viii. 15, 16: "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, &c. That he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end."

So that the afflicting providences of God are not only apt in their own nature to do us good, but which is a more express argument of the Divine goodness, God intends and aims at this end by them: he does not send judgments up on this theatre of the world for his sport and pastime, nor set on one part of his creation to bait another for his own diversion: he does not, like some of the cruel Roman Emperors, take pleasure to exercise men with dangers, and to see them play bloody prizes before him.

Nay, he does nothing that is severe out of humour and passion, as our earthly parents many times do. Indeed he is angry with us for our sins; but yet so as still to pity our persons: and when his providence makes use of any sharp and cutting instruments, it is with this merciful design, to let out our corruption: If he cast us into the furnace of affliction, it is that he may refine and purify us from our dross.

So that though the judgments of God be evils in themselves, yet considering the intention of God in them, they are no real objections against his goodness, but rather arguments for it.

Tillotson.

## EVENING.—MAY 8.

THE AWAKENED CONSCIENCE.

Lord, how secure my conscience was, And felt no inward dread! I was alive without the law, And thought my sins were dead.

My hopes of heav'n were firm and bright; But since the precept came With a convincing pow'r and light, I find how vile I am. I'm like an helpless captive, sold Under the pow'r of sin; I cannot do the good I would, Nor keep my conscience clean.

My God! I cry with ev'ry breath
For thy kind pow'r to save,
To break the yoke of sin and death,
And thus redeem the slave.

Golden Treasury.

THE PRAYERS OF THOSE WHO ARE WOUNDED IN CON-SCIENCE, NOT BREATHED IN VAIN. LAMENTATIONS III.

42 We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.

43 Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied.

44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayers

should not pass through.

45 Thou hast made us as the off-scouring and refuse in the midst of the people.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

47 Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction.

48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the

40 Mine eye rullines to down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any ntermission,

50 Till the Lord look down, and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city,

52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird without cause. 53 They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.

54 Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off. 55 ¶ I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low

dungeon.

56 Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

57 Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

58 O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.

#### A SLOTHFUL CONSCIENCE MUST BE AWAKENED.

The supine indolence of those who deem themselves Christians, has often been with good men the subject of serious reflection. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber," many seem to say in a spirit of shameful sluggishness, to their spoiled consciences, which, unused to virtuous exertion, their feeble-minded possessors want resolution rudely to tear from a course of iniquity. God be praised that such language is not ours now, while, obedient to the call of the monitor within, we seek, with appropriate zeal, to close the course of our daily devotions, by communion with our Maker. Our thoughts, Oh Lord, we anxiously

raise to thee. We thankfully adore thy goodness, but while doing so, we seek not to conceal from ourselves that too often we have erred, and suffered our consciences to sleep. Unhappy that we are, thus to be overtaken—thus to be arrested in our path. Who, who will rescue us from the thraldom of this deplorable mental somnolency? Can our weakness, our degrading passions, have made a pact with conscience, that for their sake it shall hold its peace, or at most, break silence

by a slight whisper?

While thus we have spared our own misdeeds, we are not equally indulgent to others. Of their offences we do not think lightly, but are virtuously loud in condemnation, while of our own, no serious notice has been taken. In regard to them conscience has shewn no energy, it gives scarcely any indication of life where they are concerned; yet, perhaps, the nocturnal robbery in which some wretched and desperate man is now employed, is less criminal than our negligence in the sight of the great searcher of hearts. Should we now compose ourselves to sleep, without offering the homage of our gratitude to that God, who created, and has preserved us, doing this with a hankering after sinful pleasures, our conduct would be more sinful than the culpable violence of the untaught robber. He wounds a man perhaps, but that may be more excusable than our course in torturing those about us, as we have frequently done, by our arrogance, self-will, and froward humours. We have over him the advantages of education, of cultivated intellect; and as, in our cases, more has been given, more may justly be required at our hands, and by us all thy ordinances ought to be strictly observed.

But conscience with us is not a little disposed to conceal itself behind politeness, as if good manners, in themselves, were positive virtues. We ought to feel that the sins of the palace, and those of the cottage, are the same in the eye of the Judge of all the earth; and an unchaste expression in the former, is as reprehensible as an immoral action in the latter. You may be equally rude, gross, and culpable, in the language of courts, as in the coarser language of the sons of labour, and beyond all doubt, improper words are more offensive and disgusting among those who claim distinction for refinement, than from the peasants on whom they look down with pity or contempt.

But conscience will sometimes hint to us, that we need not move when others are on the alert;

that we may "yet a little sleep, and slumber," on account of the virtues for which we give ourselves credit. But in proportion as we may suppose that we have a higher moral value, the more resolute we ought to be not to indulge in any sin, however strongly it may be urged upon us by fashion, custom, or the restless demands of our passions. We have experienced what we are able to do, when we listen to the voice of conscience, when conscience, true to its duty, speaks boldly out. Woe then to us if we allow the voice of the Judge to sleep, and to slumber within us.

But sensible as we are of this, without thy aid, Oh God! we can do nothing. Wake then our consciences, whenever they may sleep, that, continuing to do so, they may not provoke thy indignation, and cause thy wrathful thunder to be heard. Every sin, whatever it may be named, is in itself a poison, and fatal therefore in its effects on life and happiness. But conscience, an ever wakeful conscience, is essential to the dignity of man. Without that, however refined his manners. however polite his deportment, his weakness is continually exposed to danger. We are often more afraid of offending the rules of good breeding, than of violating the most solemn duties imposed upon us by our Lord; we are more alarmed at a rude or hasty word that may escape us, than disturbed by the evil which lurks in our secret thoughts, imaginings, and desires. We are more ready to blame ourselves for the slight evil openly committed, than for the great one secretly indulged, or the good we have omitted to do.

Forgive, forgive us, O Lord! for all the sins which we have hitherto excused or overlooked in ourselves, and aid us with thy blessed spirit, so that henceforth our own consciences, ever vigilant, may school us more severely. Its sleeping we feel is most dangerous to our immortal souls. Infinitely better were it for us, that we should be sad and restless through this and many succeeding nights, than that we should calmly repose, our sins against the God who gave us being left unreproved. Should that again take place, should conscience, the sentinel of the soul, sleep on his post, our case will be melancholy. The sequel of such insensibility must be sad; the late waking of conscience, dreadful in the extreme.

WE OUGHT NOT TO FORGET OUR PAST TRANSGRESSIONS.

Though a believer has obtained forgiveness from God of all the sins which he has formerly committed; for this is noted inconsistent with his being humbled for, and often calling them to mind. Some who have had a comfortable hope that

they are in a justified state, have, notwithstanding, expressed themselves to this purpose; though God has graciously forgiven me, I cannot forgive myself, that is, I cannot think on my past conduct, without regret and shame; and it is agreeable to what the prophet says, "That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. And Job calls to mind the sins of his youth, and concludes, that God was writing bitter things against him for them; and elsewhere, abhors himself, and repents in dust and ashes, notwithstanding all the experiences he had had of the grace of God in subduing and pardoning them. A believer looks forward with hope, when he considers the blessings that are reserved for him, and backward with sorrow and self-abasement, whereby he retains a constant sense of his own unworthiness. He comforts himself in Christ, while he is greatly afflicted with the remembrance of what he has done against him, and the many instances of contempt that he has cast on the gospel, which at present he apprehends to be the spring of all his support and encouragement.

We are not to expect to find relief under a sense of the guilt of sin, by concealing or extenuating it, or to take encouragement, that there are others whose crimes are more notorious than ours, but by having recourse to that salvation that is in Christ. We are to charge ourselves with guilt, and then seek to be discharged from it by that atonement he has made. When we confess sin, we are not to say, "Lord, I am not so great a sinner as many others in the world, therefore I hope that thou wilt deal well with me; or, I have been diligent in the performance of many moral duties, and for this reason, I trust that thou wilt overlook the unavoidable infirmities and failures of life, that I might accuse myself of; " this is to seek righteousness and salvation in ourselves rather than in Christ. The apostle Paul could say, that before his conversion he was, with respect to the righteousness which is in the law, blameless, in the eye of the world; yet, when he speaks of Christ as coming to save sinners, he reckons himself the chief of them. We are in no danger of being guilty of excess in condemning ourselves, provided we apply ourselves at the same time to Christ as God's salvation. The wound that sin has made is not to be skinned over, but laid open and searched to the bottom, which may be painful, and uneasy to us, but we must betake ourselves to Christ for the healing virtue of his blood, which is the only safe way for us to find ease and comfort.

Dr. Ridgley.

## MORNING.—MAY. 9.

CHRIST GIVES LIGHT TO THE BLIND.

Buried in shadows of the night We lie till Christ restores the light; Wisdom descends to heal the blind, And chase the darkness of the mind.

Our guilty souls are drown'd in tears, Till his atoning blood appears; Then we awake frem deep distress, And sing the Lord our righteousness. Our very frame is mixed with sin, His Spirit makes our natures clean; Such virtues from his sufferings flow, At once to cleanse and pardon too.

Jesus beholds where Satan reigns, Binding his slaves in heavy chains; He sets the prisoners free, and breaks The iron bondage from our necks.

Poor helpless worms in thee possess Grace, wisdom, power, and righteousness; Thou art our mighty all, and we Give our whole selves, O Lord, to thee.

Watts.

#### GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE GOOD. PSALM CXIX.

129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

132 Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

usest to do unto those that love thy name.

133 Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity

have dominion over me.
134 Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep

thy precepts.

135 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach

me thy statutes.

136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep

not thy law.

137 Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy

judgments.
138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righ-

teous and very faithful.

139 My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies

have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

140 Iny word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.
141 I am small and despised: yet do I not forget thy
precepts.

## WORLDLY SUFFERINGS LEAD TO HOPE, COMFORT, AND HEAVEN.

Our own experience teaches the folly of being too much elated with success. We see many, for a while, intoxicated with good fortune, arrogantly assuming that they have placed themselves beyond the reach of fate, mournfully brought down by calamity, and overwhelmed with despair. Against this we are admonished in the Bible. There we read, "In the day of prosperity, be joyful; but in the day of adversity, consider; for God hath also set the one against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." It will be decidedly beneficial to us to remember, in adversity, that that, as well as

prosperity, comes also from God, and it must therefore be a messenger of his blessings. To those blessings, which can only be brought to us by the evil day, let our attention be especially directed, in order to guard our hearts against ill humour, and surly discontent, when the loss of present blessings shall be felt in the approaching hour of sorrow. The sufferings by which, when it shall really have come, it will be marked. the anguish which it will cause, and the burthens it will impose, are indeed, by themselves, felt as any thing but blessings; but all that is connected with, or produced by them, and their final results, will be eventually found to be such, if our souls can bear the evil day with patience and confidence. That is the peaceful fruit of righteousness, which falls to the happy lot of Christians who have been tried by, and who have not sunk under, the painful ordeal. But this fruit, the rich reward of fortitude, may be wholly lost to us, if the soul, altogether absorbed by its misery and alarm, shall abandon itself to inconsolable grief; or permit itself to be exasperated by the discipline it receives, and not perceive, in the most gloomy season of unmitigated sadness, the paternal goodness of the Lord, who arranges every thing for our ultimate benefit. That such is his object, is not concealed from man. He renders it visible to our mortal sight, if we do not shut our eyes against conviction. That we are the objects of his tenderest care, he makes clear by softening, in due time, and alleviating those sufferings which human foresight would not scruple to affirm could never be remedied, and never even know abatement. He forgets not his worshippers, and often makes a ray of divine light burst on darkness the most profound. It penetrates the dreary dungeon, by the side of the evil which has overtaken us, and, by heavenly hope, brings to the bosom which had previously been wholly given up to mourning, healing comfort.

God's mercy is thus found to temper his justice. He bears down the proud, but teaches the

humble not to despair.

But even if this compassionate love, this relenting pity, were not so immediately discernible, still the self-denial taught by the privations to which we are compelled to submit, is a blessing, felt, by the meditative mind, as an important good. That we have often experienced; it gives us fortitude, and silences the voice of weak complaint. Of this, Oh how frequently have we

had blessed proofs. May the recollection of them ever abide with us, and prepare us for whatever trials it may yet be ours to know. May we from day to day gain greater elevation of thought, increased strength, a higher state of purity, and livelier, brighter views of heaven!

It is only by such a course that we can be fitted to participate in eternal bliss. Looking forward to such a consummation, we must not continue to be fond of the earth and its deluding joys, if we would lift ourselves above the fear of

death.

Such are the appropriate studies of an immortal spirit, which, detained here for instruction and improvement, should constantly bear in mind the account which must be rendered to an Almighty Parent, when our sublunary labours have been brought to a close. We have to maintain a constant struggle against pain and suffering. Irksome and distressing as these are, they assist in conquering that desire to gain the perishable goods of earth, so common among the sons of men. They place them before us in a proper light, and enable us to seek, with rational ardour, for treasures above.

The humble Christian, deeply penetrated with the importance of the duties assigned to him, and justly valuing the glorious reward prepared for him, when this scene shall be withdrawn, thus instructed in the mournful season of adversity. will endure whatever may befal him, with calm. lowly resignation. He will not open his mouth to complain, but, submitting himself to the dispensations of an all-wise Creator, he will find repose in the belief that all things must work together for good. In humble veneration, O Lord! we desire to bend before thee, contentedly to meet such visitations as thou mayest be pleased to send. In thy boundless mercy strengthen our weakness, that this determination we may never abandon; that our present frame of mind may remain to us, till we cease to live in this world of strife and sorrow.

#### BLESSINGS GRANTED TO CHRISTIANS BY THE ALMIGHTY.

Christian, look round on the numberless blessings of one kind and of another; with which you are already encompassed; and advance your prospect still farther, to what faith yet discovers within the veil. Think of those now unbroken transports, with which thou shalt drop every burden in the grave, and thine immortal spirit shall mount, light and joyful, holy and happy, to God, its original, its support, and its hope—to God, the source of being, of holiness, and of pleasure—to Jesus, through whom all these mercies are derived to thee, and who will appoint thee a throne near his own, to be for

ever the spectator and partaker of his glory. Think of the rapture with which thou shalt attend his triumph, in the resurrection day, and receive this poor, mouldering, corruptible body transformed into his glorious image; and then think, "These hopes are not mine alone, but the hopes of thousands and millions. Multitudes, whom I number among the dearest of my friends upon earth, are rejoicing with me in these apprehensions and views: and God gives me sometimes to see the smiles on their cheeks, the sweet humble hope that sparkles in their eyes, and shines through the tears of tender gratitude; and to hear that little of their inward complacency and joy, which language can express. Yea, and multitudes more, who were once equally dear to me with these, though I have laid them in the grave, and wept over their dust, are living to God, living in the possession of inconceivable delights, and drinking large draughts of the water of life, which flows in perpetual streams at his right hand.

O Christian, thou art still intimately united and allied to them. Death cannot break a friendship thus cemented, and it ought not to render thee insensible to the happiness of those friends, for whose memory thou retainest so just an honour. They live to God as his servants: they serve him and see his face; and they make but a small part of that glorious assembly. Millions equally worthy of thine esteem and affection with themselves, inhabit those blissful regions; and wilt thou not rejoice in their joy? and wilt thou not adore that everlasting spring of holiness and happiness, from whence each of these streams are derived—yea, Î will add, while the blessed angels are so kindly regarding us, while they are ministering to thee, O Christian, and bearing thee in their arms, as an heir of salvation, wilt thou not rejoice in their felicity too? and wilt thou not adore that God, who gives them all the superior glory of their more exalted nature, and gives them a heaven, which fills them with blessedness, even while they seem to withdraw from it, that they may attend unto thee?

Doddridge.

## EVENING.—MAY 9.

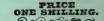
THE GLORY OF THE ETERNAL.

The Lord Jehovah reigns,
And royal state maintains,
His head with awful glories crown'd;
Array'd in robes of light,
Begirt with sovereign might,
And rays of majesty around.

Upheld by thy commands
The world securely stands;
And skies and stars obey thy word:
Thy throne was fixed on high,
Before the starry sky;
Eternal is thy kingdom, Lord

In vain the noisy crowd,
Like billows fierce and loud,
Against thine empire rage and roar;
In vain, with angry spite,
The surly nations fight,
And dash like waves against the shore.





THE

# HISTORY

OF

# IRELAND:

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD OF THE

IRISH ANNALS,

TO

THE PRESENT TIME.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq., M. A., F. S. A., &c. &c.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE; HONORARY MEMBER OF THE

AUTHOR OF "ENGLAND UNDER THE HOUSE OF HANOVER," "THE PROGRAPHIA BRITANNICA LITERARIA." "FESSAYS ILLUSTRATIV:

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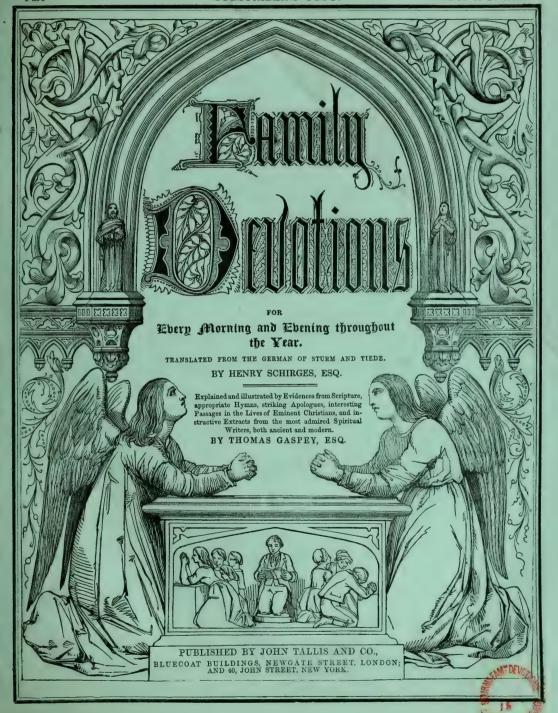
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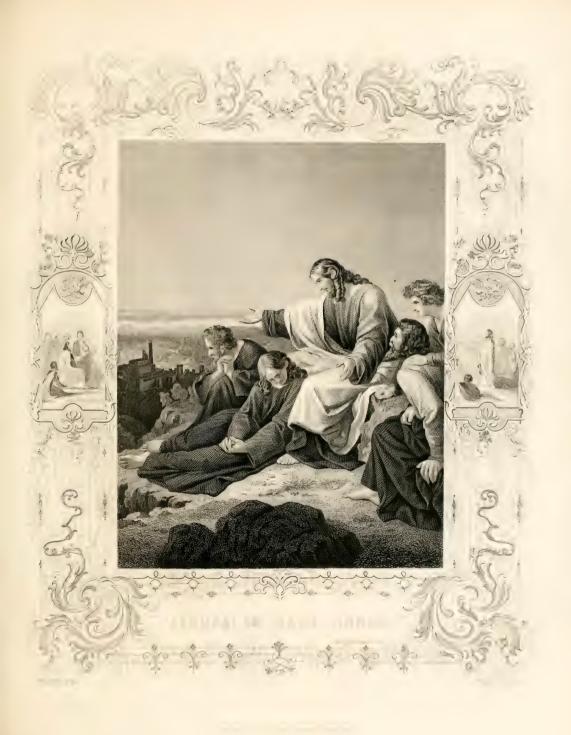
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Let floods and nations rage, And all their powers engage, Let swelling tides assault the sky, The terrors of thy frown Shall beat their madness down; Thy throne for ever stands on high.

Thy promises are true,
Thy grace is ever new:
There fix'd thy church shall ne'er remove;
Thy saints, with holy fear,
Shall in thy courts appear,
And sing thine everlasting love.

Watts.

#### GOD'S MIGHT AND GLORY. PSALM LXVIII.

4 Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

6 God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when

thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah:

8 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

10 Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of

those that published it.

12 Kings of armies did flee apace; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

nome divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.

15 The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan: an high hill as

the hill of Bashan.

16 Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God

desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sina, in the

holy place.

18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the re-

bellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, ven the God of our salvation. Selah.

#### THE RICHES AND WISDOM OF GOD.

In contemplating the government of the great Author of our being, justly may we exclaim, "Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" We can enter into the apostle's feelings, when we behold the works of

his hand, and especially when in the evening we lift up our eyes to the starry heavens. Then it is that we feel our veneration for the Almighty increased, and our hearts seem to swell with extatic wonder, and fervent adoration of his greatness and his power. When we consider how those immense celestial bodies revolve, at so vast a distance from us, that they become visible only by the reflection of their light from the stars illuminated by them, we are carried away by amazement, and can only exclaim, "Oh Lord! how great are thy works, and how many! Thou orderest the sun, with his stars, to float in the transparent space, high above us. Thou callest by name those innumerable glistening luminaries! How great, how marvellous art thou! What a view of the riches of thy wisdom dost thou open to our eyes, when we contemplate the structure of thy universe, and the established order of nature, rendered by thy fiat inexhaustibly rich." In vain do we attempt to fashion these feelings of admiration into words; and equally vain were it for us to attempt to explore the whole of those laws by which all we behold is regulated and governed, or to trace the connection which exists between the numerous celestial bodies which shine in the sky.

Not attempting a task so greatly above our finite powers, wisely fixing our eyes on the earth. and reflecting on the surprising effects there produced by the sun of spring, we seem to be almost made witnesses of a new creation; nature seems to celebrate the festival of her regeneration, fresh life bursts from death, and the dreary desert is changed to a smiling paradise. How beautifully ornamented is the field, which but a few weeks ago was dull, lifeless, and rugged! The leaves and blossoms of the trees now press forward from the darker branches. Flowers are scattered over the newly-carpeted meadow, and the feathered wanderers, returning from far distant lands, the lovely harbingers of summer, enliven the scene, embellish it with their animating presence, and fill the air with their melodies.

The spectacle thus presented is glorious, but how are its charms increased to mortal eyes, if we apply ourselves to that labour which has been imposed on our race, and with the scrutinizing eye of a lover of nature, make it our task to add to the beauties which are raised from the teeming bosom of the earth, as workmen in the garden of our God.

All that we behold tends to increase our admi-

ration for the benevolent and omnipotent Deity who gave us existence, and placed us in a scene so fair. How justly is our confidence increased in him, when we mark his providence in the various productions of the soil! We sow the seed, in the hope that it may feed and rejoice us m due season by its fruit. We witness the desired result, and gratefully feel that all comes from the great and good Lord, who reigns on high. The slumbering atoms, thus waked to burst from the dust which oppressed them with fresh vigour and beauty, seem living expositors of the fate of man. They make our mortal eyes see how possible it is for the Master of all, to cause mean, and small, and lifeless atoms to become rich, and large, and flourishing objects. All things obey the mighty will of our God.

Almighty and all-gracious Parent and Protector of man! we feel that every thing in which we rejoice, comes from thy bounty; that thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desires of every creature thou hast endowed with life. We know that we live, and move, and have in thee our being; and it is thy visitation, thy care, and thy love, that sustains us in our progress. Enable us to recognise thy bounty, with a sincerely grateful heart. Increase those feelings of veneration in our souls, which, till this day, we have cherished; and as our hours glide away, let us be enabled to exult that we feel thy presence more and more. So be it with us this night. Retiring to rest, with a thankful, satisfied, and confiding spirit, may we wake to a joyful morrow, prepared to enter on a new course of duty, with cheerful alacrity, and a mind rendered perfectly collected and serene, by a lively sense of the condescending goodness and boundless mercy of its sublime and immortal Author.

THE SHARPEST SUFFERINGS WELCOME TO THE CHRISTIAN FROM GOD.

Master Doctor Ridley, as he passed towards Bocardo, looked up where Master Cranmer did lie, hoping belike to have seen him at the glass window, and to have spoken unto him. but then Master Cranmer was busy with Friar Soto and his fellows, disputing together, so that he could not see him through that occasion; when Master Ridley, looking back, espied Master Latimer coming after, unto whom he said, "Ah! be ye there?"—"Yea," said Master Latimer, "have after as fast as I can follow." So he following a pretty way off, at length they came both to the stake, the one after the other: when, first, Doctor Ridley entering the place, marvellously earnestly holding up both his hands, looked towards heaven; then, shortly after, espying Master Latimer, with a monstrous cheeful look, he ran to him, embraced and kissed him; and, as they that stood near reported, comforted him, saying, "Be of good heart, brother,

for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." With that he went to the stake by it, kissed it, and effectuously prayed; and behind him, Master Latimer, as earnestly calling upon God as he. After they arose, the one talked with the other a little while, till they, which were appointed to see execution, removed themselves out of the sun. What they said I can learn of no man.

When Dr. Smith began his sermon to them upon this text of St. Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, "If I give my body to the fire to be burnt, and have not charity, I shall gain nothing thereby." Wherein he alledged that the goodness of the cause, and not the order of death, maketh the holiness of the person; which he confirmed by the example of Judas, and of a woman in Oxford that of late hanged herself; for that they, and such like as he recited, might then be adjudged righteous, which desperately sundered their lives from their bodies, as he feared that those men who stood before him would do; but he cried still to the people to beware of them, for they were heretics, and died out of the church; and, on the other side, he declared their diversities in opinion, as Lutherans, Æcolampadians, Zuinglians, of which sect they were, he said, and that was the worst. But the old church of Christ and the catholic faith, believed far otherwise. At which place they lifted up both their hands and eyes to heaven, as it were, calling God to witness of the truth, the which countenance they made in many other places of his sermon, whereas they thought he spake amiss. He ended with a very short exhortation to them to recant, and to come home again to the church, and save their lives and souls, which else were condemned. His sermon was scant in all a quarter of an hour.

Doctor Ridley said to Master Latimer, "Will you begin to answer the sermon, or shall I?" Master Latimer said, "Begin you first, I pray you." "I will," said Doctor Ridley.

Then the wicked sermon being ended, Doctor Ridley and Master Latimer kneeled down upon their knees towards my Lord Williams of Tame, the vice-chancellor of Oxford, and divers other commissioners, appointed for that purpose, which sate upon a form thereby, unto whom Doctor Ridley said, "I beseech you, my lord, even for Christ's sake, that I may speak out two or three words;" and, whilst my lord bent his head to the mates and vice-chancellor, to know (as it appeared) whether he might give him leave to speak, the bailiffs and Doctor Marshall, vice-chancellor, ran hastily unto him, and with their hands stopped his mouth, and said, "Master Ridley, if you will revoke your erroneous opinions, and recant the same, you shall not only have liberty so to do, but also the benefit of a subject, that is, have your life." "Not otherwise?" said Master Ridley. "No," quoth Doctor Marshall; "therefore if you will not so do, then there is no remedy but you must suffer for your deserts." "Well," quoth Doctor Ridley, "so long as the breath is in my body I will never deny my Lord Christ and his known truth: God's will be done in me." And with that he rose up, and said, with a loud voice, "Well, then, I commit our cause to Almighty God, which shall indifferently judge all."

To whose saying, Master Latimer added his old poesie: "Well, there is nothing hid but it shall be opened."

Then Master Ridley, being in his shirt, held up his hands and said, "Oh! heavenly Father, I give thee most hearty thanks for that thou hast called me to be a professor of thee, even unto death: I beseech thee, Lord God, take mercy upon this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies."

Then the smith took a chain of iron, and brought the same about both Doctor Ridley's and Master Latimer's middles; and as he was knocking in a staple, Doctor Ridley took the chain in his hand and shaked the same, for it did gird in his belly, and looked aside to the smith, said, "Good fellow, knock it in hard, for the flesh will have his course." Then his brother did bring him gunpowder in a bag, and would have tied the same about his neck; Master Ridley asked what it was: his brother said, "Gunpowder;" then said he, "I will take it to be sent of God therefore I will receive it as sent of him."

\*\*Life of Bishop Latimer.\*\*

# MORNING.-MAY 10.

ADOPTION PRAYED.

Holy Father, lend an ear,
Whilst I sue in Jesus' name;
Surely thou wilt kindly hear,
Since I bring no human claim:
Let me for adoption stay,
Only give me power to pray.

Grant me comfort, or deny, Visit, or from me depart, Only let thy Spirit cry Abba, Father, in my heart; Abba, Father, would I say, Only give me power to pray.

Golden Treasury.

#### SPIRITUAL GIFTS. I. CORINTHIANS, XII.

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these

dumb idols, even as ye were led.

- 3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.
- 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.
  5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

§ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom;
to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers

kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit,
dividing to every man severally as he will.

#### BLESSED EFFECTS OF THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION.

The Christian may look up to the Author of his being as to a parent. "We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Such is the language of scripture; and how bliss-

ful is the thought, how cheering the belief, that God is our Father!—how salutary and encouraging the contemplation of that intercourse with him, to which we attain as Christians!

To know that God is our Father, gives us all that we can want to calm the anxious cares of our hearts, and to warm them into glorious aspirings,

to earnest cravings after immortal life.

To know that God is our Father, relieves us from that appalling awe with which we must otherwise look on his boundless might and exalted majesty. It banishes that despondency from our minds which would come over them when we contemplate our own sinfulness. But for this comforting thought, we should be weighed down by a sense of our own guilt, and looking up to our Father, doubts and fears are set at rest; confidence comes to our support, and we are prepared to meet the future, otherwise gloomy, with calm resignation, or with joyful hope.

But whence this happiness?—by whom, or by what means, do we gain admission to God, as to our Father? By whom have we received the spirit of adoption, through which we are entitled to raise the cry of "Abba, Father?" Through whom is it that we may cheerfully look forward to a blissful result for all our labours? It is through the merits of our Redeemer. Placed by him under the law of the all-wise One, our fate is governed by a parent's wisdom, and not a hair can fall from our heads without the will of our father

who is in heaven.

Our souls, awake to the importance of the subject, can never dwell upon this comfortable and elevating thought, without gratefully rejoicing in its happiness, to belong to God through Christ; and of being enlightened, reconciled, and saved through him. Without Christ, God would not be to us as a father, and our earthly lot would be cast in a horrid desert. Perplexed by doubts, and harrassed by thrilling apprehensions, we should seek an outlet with unspeakable anguish, but in vain. An awful enigma, never to be solved, would keep us in a state of incessant Such is not the case since we are permitted to consider ourselves the objects of the loving providence of God. To be such, to be in his care, can bring us to no harm. It can only contribute to promote within us a more lively sense of our happiness in Christ, while it animates and strengthens our joyful confidence in the father of all, and confirms us in resignation to his will. The consciousness that such is our distinguished

happiness, will give us an additional impulse to strive for a pure heart; lead us to apply ourselves to all that is virtuous, and prepare us, from our becoming certain of the paternal love of God, to enter on the perfect enjoyment of that certainty.

Though by religion our thoughts may be exalted—raised above the earth, our social utility will be increased. The true Christian, by his moral elevation, will be distinguished from the mere moralist, and the early blossoms of piety will not fail to herald the coming of the goodly fruit. As our Saviour, after death, rose with new life from the grave, we shall spring from the coldness and languor into which, for a time, we may have fallen, to throw off the trammels and the sullying dirt of this world, and seek with him a heaven of glory.

Eternal praise to thee, Oh Father! that thou, in thy love for us thy servants, hast permitted us to receive the spirit of adoption, and so enlarged our minds, that, relieved from vain fears, we have not to serve thee as a task-master in the pains of bondage. Praise and glory to thy immortal Son, our Lord and Redeemer, for having created within us this spirit of adoption, by his gospel and his bitter death on the cross; and praise to the Holy Ghost, for assisting us, as the Spirit of truth and power, to make that spirit of adoption our own. Blessed Trinity! Great triune God! to thee we will ever faithfully adhere. Till our end comes, till the sleep of death falls on us, thy righteousness shall be kept before us, shall be dear to our souls, and never, never forsaken.

#### DEATH DEPRIVED OF HIS TERRORS BY MEDITATION.

About the morning, speaking to Mrs. Cooke, he said, "Lamb do not dishonour my last wedding day by any trouble for me; for if all my judges did but know, what glory I shall be in before twelve of the clock, they would desire to be with me.

"And let the executioner make what haste he can, I shall be before hand with him, for before he can say, here is the head of a traitor, I shall be in heaven. 'Come Lord Jesus come quickly, my soul longeth for thee, and I wait to hear thy voice, saying, come up hither, and immediately I shall be in the spirit;' and then shall I for ever be with the Lord. And at midnight there was a cry heard, the bridegroom cometh, and they that were ready went in unto the marriage; 'This day I shall enter into the joy of my Lord.'

"Come, brother Peters, let us knock at heaven gates this morning. God will open the doors of eternity to us before twelve of the clock, and let us into that innumerable company of saints and angels, and to the souls of just men made perfect, and then we shall never part more, but be with the Lord for ever, and ever, singing praises, singing praises to our Lord and everlasting King to all eternity." He said further, "O what a good master have I served, that stands by me

now, and supports me; with his everlasting arm he bears me up;" then said, 'Come away my beloved, make haste, and be thou like unto a young roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of spices.' Behold I come Lord Jesus, I come full sail to thee, I come upon the wing of faith, Lord Jesus receive me:" and going to lie down upon his bed, he said, 'It is no more to go to die to-morrow, than it is to go to sleep to night. I bless the Lord I am free from trouble, and my poor heart is as full of spiritual comfort as ever it can hold, 'And this joy can no man take from me.'"

The doors of the prison being opened in the morning, he spent that little time he had left in prayer and heavenly discourse with friends that came to visit him, preparing himself for his suffering, with such a cheerfulness, as was an astonishment

to the spectators.

Then speaking to his wife, said, "Farewell my dear lamb, I am now going to the souls under the altar, that cry, how long, O Lord, holy and true; dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on earth, and when I am gone, my blood will cry and do them more hurt than if I had lived. But I am now going to eternity, blessed be God, be not troubled for me, but rejoice, because I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." And after some time spent in prayer, he desired his wife not to withhold him by an unwillingness to part with him now, when God called for him, to be offered up as a sacrifice for his name and cause.

After a little pause, she freely gave him up to the Lord; to which he replied, "Now all the work is done," and said, "I resign thee up to Jesus Christ, to be thy husband, to whom also

I am going to be married in glory this day."

His wife shedding tears, he said, "Why weepest thou? let them weep who part, and shall never meet again; but I am confident we shall have a glorious meeting in heaven; here our comforts have been mixed with chequer work of troubles, but in heaven all tears shall be wiped from our eyes."

He asked several times if the sheriff was not come, saying, "Why stayeth the wheels of his chariot? Why do they drive so heavily? I am ready, blessed be God, I have nothing to do but to die."

Word being brought that the sheriff was come, he makes haste to be gone, and his wife stepping after him took him by the arm, whereupon he said, "O do not hinder me from going to Jesus Christ."

And then with a cheerful countenance, taking leave of his friends, he went to the sledge that carried him, whereon was also carried the head of Major General Thomas Harrison, with the face bare towards him; and nothwithstanding that dismal sight, he passed rejoicingly through the streets, as one born up by that spirit which man could not cast down. Being come to the place of execution, when he was taken out of the sledge, he said, "This is the easiest chariot that ever I rid in all my life."

Last Moments of Mr. Justice Cooke.

# EVENING.—MAY 10.

GOD'S SAINTS CANNOT BE LOST.

God is the refuge of his saints, When storms of sharp distress invade; Ere we can offer our complaints, Behold him ready with his aid. Let mountains from their seats be hurl'd Down to the deep, and buried there; Convulsions shake the solid world. Our faith shall never yield to fear,

Though loud the troubled ocean roar, Our souls may yet in peace abide; While every nation, every shore, Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.

Golden Treasury.

GOD'S CHASTISEMENTS ARE BENEFITS, TO THOSE THAT BELIEVE IN HIM. FROVERES, XXIX.

15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to

himself bringeth his mother to shame. 16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression in-

creaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall

17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

19 A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

20 Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.

22 An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.

25 The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe,

# THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE WILL RENDER HIS TRIALS LESS SEVERE.

"God meant it unto good;"—so will the true Christian often feel moved to say with Joseph. Whatever misfortunes it may be ours to encounter; whatever sickness we may endure; whatever losses we may sustain, still the same reflection occurs to those who believe in the promises. and whatever changes we witness, whether they bring prosperity or affliction, still the faithful heart is compelled to make the avowal, "God meant it unto good." Have we not often been rejoiced and surprised by the gracious dispensations of Providence, which proved that God had heard our prayers, taken pity on our grief, and brought us unexpected comfort? Our wishes, once cherished, but regarded as vain dreams, have been graciously realised, and a favourable change effected in our prospects, which we were far from daring to anticipate. Often, with shame and regret, have we had to blame our own recreant pusillanimity, where we have found with astonishment our best, our boldest hopes, far, far exceeded by Almighty goodness, which has granted not only all that we could presume to ask, but even more than we could conceive.

Yet, such the degenerate fears to which we are liable, though the proofs of the goodness and protecting care of the Most High were not few nor small, when again a threatening storm has lowered over us, our terrors, our want of confidence in the Creator of the universe, have returned, and we have shrunk within ourselves in culpable dismay, even while the Lord was about to speak to us. And why, doubting, meanly distrustful soul, rich in experience of the Lord's compassion, dost thou tremble in abject fear, overwhelmed with grief and destitute of comfort, and even of hope? Such a state of mind is not less criminal than it is miserable. Why, in seasons of the greatest difficulty, do we not constantly bear in mind the blessed assurance—"God meant it unto good?" Is it only for this evening hour, and for our mortal bodies, that he offers us refreshment and repose? Does not the Lord offer us his grace, that the soul may find rest? We may obtain it at all times, by throwing ourselves, with confiding love, into his out-stretched arms; by submitting humbly to his decrees, and putting our trust in him, though we cannot unravel his If it be his pleasure to deny us the power of penetrating his counsels, and to read the future, still it is not for us to murmur.

We are not to arrogate to ourselves authority to criticise the ways of God. If we appeal to memory, we shall find abundant grounds for coming to the conclusion that it is good and salutary for man to be kept in the dark, to a certain extent; that it should be denied to him to know

what is to come.

Why should we allow our minds to be distracted by vain apprehensions? As the child knows no fear in the arms of his parent, we, walking in the ways of God, should feel thoroughly persuaded, that come what may, he "means it unto good."

The fretful man, in countless instances, finds that he has been the victim of foolish alarms. When evils, the most formidable, have threatened his peace, how often has some door been unexpectedly opened, by which he could escape the danger, or if that which he most dreaded has come to pass, he has gained unexpected support from above, to meet it. By abandoning ourselves to unmanly despondency, we at once embitter our own lives, and disturb the peace of those with

whom we are associated, and who are to us most dear, while every task which we have had to perform, has been rendered more difficult. Shall we still proceed in a course so irrational? Shall we crush beneath our feet, with cold indifference, or thankless repining, the flowers of spring, which a kind Providence orders to blossom in our path? Thus to act, will be to offend our Lord and Saviour. No-this we devoutly hope shall not

happen again.

Guided by a merciful Redeemer, and referring to the wants of our past years, we will serenely advance in life's road. Thorny and rugged it may prove, but we shall gain strength as we proceed. Our faith will increase as our difficulties thicken. Our spirits shall feel that the most fearful visitations have for their object our lasting welfare. The omnipotent arm of our God will be our shield, and our sure protection. Thy watchfulness, O Lord! will never fail: and, convinced of that, our courage must not desert us, and our thoughts shall constantly turn to thee, with unaffected gratitude, and holy hope.

#### THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY IS A BLESSING TO MANKIND.

This. O Christian! is the command which we have heard from the beginning, and it will ever continue in unimpaired force, that he who loved God, should love his brother also; and should express that love, not in word and profession alone, but in deed and in truth. You are to love your neighbour as yourself; to love the whole creation of God, and, so far as your influence can extend, must endeavour to make it

happy.
"Yes," you will say, "and I do love it. I feel the golden chain of the divine love encircling us all, and binding us close to each other, joining us in one body, and diffusing, as it were, one soul through all. May happiness, true and sublime, perpetual and overgrowing happiness, reign through the whole world of God's rational and obedient creatures, in heaven and on earth! and may every revolted creature, that is capable of being recovered and restored, be made obedient! yea, may the necessary punishment of those who are irre-coverable, be over-ruled by infinite wisdom and love, to the

good of the whole!

These are right sentiments; and if they are indeed the sentiments of your heart, O reader, and not an empty form of vain words, they will be attended with a serious concern to act in subordination to this great scheme of divine providence, according to your abilities in their utmost extent. And to this purpose, they will put you on surveying the peculiar circumstances of your life and being; that you may discover what opportunities of usefulness they now afford, and how these opportunities and capacities may be improved. Enter therefore, into such survey; not that you may pride yourself in distinctions of divine providence or grace towards you, or having received, may glory as if you had not received; out that you may deal faithfully with the great proprietor, whose steward you are, and by whom you are entrusted with every talent, which with respect to any claim from your fellow creatures, you may call your own. And here, having gifts differing according to the grace which is now given unto us,

let us hold the balance with an impartial hand, that so we may determine what it is that God requires of us; which is nothing less, than doing the most we can invent, contrive, and effect, for the general good. But Oh! how seldom is this estimate faithfully made; and how much does the world around us, and how much do our own souls suffer, for want of that fidelity!

Dr. Doddridge.

# MORNING.—MAY 11.

#### HEARTS OF FLESH PRAYED FOR HEARTS OF STONE.

To what a stubborn frame Has sin reduced our mind! What strange ungrateful wretches we? And God as strangely kind.

Turn, turn us, mighty God, And mould our souls afresh; Break, sov'reign grace, these hearts of stone. And give us hearts of flesh.

Let old ingratitude Provoke our weeping eyes, And hourly as new mercies fall, Let hourly thanks arise.

Golden Treasury

FORGIVING THOSE WHO OFFEND THEM, MEN LAY UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN. MATTHEW VI.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will

your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 ¶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and

wash thy face:

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break

through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be

# MERCY SHEWN BY MAN, TO MAN WILL BE REWARDED BY THE ALMIGHTY.

In proportion as, for ourselves, we desire the favour of the great Ruler of the skies, we ought to be disposed to look with benevolence on the

"Be ye therefore doings of our fellow-men. merciful as your father also is merciful," is the commandment of the scriptures, and it is one which the true Christian will never long permit to be absent from his memory. Yet if we examine ourselves with sincerity, and searching inquiry, we shall discover that, in the course of our lives, we have often, Oh, how sinfully! offended against it. He who knows our hearts, and all our works, and words, cannot but see that we have performed but few real acts of Christian charity. We have indeed sometimes been kind to our fellow creatures, where we had no selfish object in view. There have been cases in which we have acted with real benevolence, and felt indulgent and forbearing, but too frequently, even when before men our conduct has been blameless, nay, even laudable, something mean, exacting, or unfair, has lurked behind: when unobserved we have been disposed to snatch at a profit, where we ought to have looked for no gain. We have sought worldly advantages, and at the expense of others, which we ought not to have coveted. And why have we acted so unworthily? Because we have forgotten the words of our Saviour. ye love them that love ye, what reward have ye?" "Do good, and lend to them of whom you expect no reward, and your reward will be great," and you will be called children of the Most High. This we cannot too seriously meditate upon, for our souls are much disposed to overlook the importance of being loving and kind, especially if their love is not equally returned, and unrequited; and still more so, when we meet with ingratitude, have to bear mortifications, and suffer injustice.

The absence of kindness on such occasions shows the hungry, worldly-craving spirit within us; proves that even when we persuade ourselves, we are exerting ourselves from a love of virtue, we are anxious for an instantaneous recompense. This is not the spirit which we ought to manifest; it is not that of Jesus Christ, and those who are strangers to his spirit here, will not know him at

the last judgment.

To strengthen ourselves in virtuous resolutions, and to look with compassion on those who unhappily adopt a different course, is that which we ought to regard as a duty. In love and kindness then, we will regard all our fellow mortals; we will delight to shew mercy, and with this feeling, we look up to thee, our God and Father, who permittest thy sun to rise on the good and on the evil, and thy rain to descend alike on the just,

and on the unjust. From the example furnished by our glorious Redeemer, we will labour to act with equity, meekness, forbearance, and compassion, for the wicked. His example shall constantly be referred to by us, as tracing out the course of our duty. Oh, may this, which we have had opportunities of contemplating so often, be from the present time always borne in mind! Let us further reflect, that feeling we have many deficencies in ourselves, it is but reasonable we should bear patiently with others, who gave no offence. We should sorrow with those who mourn, if we would claim their sympathy in the day of our own sadness. As we judge our neighbours, we must expect to be judged ourselves, and the measure we mete out to others, will be measured out back to us again.

We owe a constant manifestation of love to our fellow creatures, from the love which our Saviour has shown for us. It was in order to place brotherly love on the throne, that he became man. This was one great object of his mission, and it was his to preach that brotherly love must ever be evinced on the part of those whose bosoms were really warmed by the love of God.

That an example, not to be mistaken, should be furnished, Christ appeared among enemies. He met the wrath of those who hated him; the scorn of those who mocked him; and amidst it all, he laboured to prepare a home for brotherly love, in this, our benighted and degenerate world. He came to show that good should be returned for evil; and, patient, and enduring to the last, to lay down his life for the world.

What then remains for us to do, if we seek to honour our Lord, and promote our own happiness, by proving ourselves grateful to Christ? As Christians, we must be careful not to neglect the duty imposed upon us by our faith, that of regarding all the human race with benevolence and We may never more be indifferent to the absence of our neighbour, nor will we answer reproaches by reproaches, but meekness and forbearance shall be our ambition. Kindly to console those who are unhappy, and gently to reprove those who err, shall be our delight. It is thus we may prove that we really know the Lord, and understand why Christ came to this world, by showing that we seek but love for love. Not at present can we boast of the self-command that uniformly abstains from doing wrong to others: that avoids offence in the common intercourse of life, and never omits an opportunity for effecting

a work of charity. Conscience refuses to give us this honourable testimony, In future, we humbly hope we shall be found more faithful to duty; more ready to look with kindly forbearance on the faults of others; to pity their weaknesses: to spare their feelings, and to contribute, by every means in our power, to their comfort and happiness. Our soothing voices, our friendly admonitions, shall not be wanting to sustain and help them on their way. Thus shall we prove that we are converted by the spirit of Christ, and that we, indeed, are his. Not to us let their gratitude be given. This we do not look for, nor do we claim any kind services in return for those which we render to others. To us it is happily known that charity covers a multitude of sins. This thought is sufficient to console for all the unkindness we may experience from thankless men we have attempted to serve. Before the Lord of all, it will plead for us at the last day, and, so to speak, pave our way to heaven.

#### LABOURS OF CHARITY.

To bring the heathen within the pale of Christianity, the two brothers, Christian and Abraham Albrecht, with brother Sydenfaden, supported by the Netherland Society, left the Cape, in order to introduce the gospel among the Namacquas, a remote and untutored tribe, situated at about a month's journey from the station at the Great Orange river, occupied by Anderson and Kramer.

These brethren began their journey on the 22nd of May, 1805, and suffered much in passing through the barren deserts. They had not only to provide for themselves, but for those who conducted their waggons, eleven persons in the whole, which they found exceedingly difficult, and were at one time ready to faint; when, according to an earnest wish they had expressed to each other, that Cornelius Kok, (a Hottentot who resided in that part of the country,) would come to their assistance, they were almost immediately gratified with the appearance of his son, who assured them that his father was coming to help them with two yoke of oxen. This proved a great relief for the present; but in the prosecution of their journey, fresh difficulties occurred, every one being ready to perish with hunger and thirst: they met with repeated disappointments where they expected to find water; and were obliged to lodge in places infested with wild beasts, and where the Boschemen had before murdered all the inhabitants.

In these distressing circumstances, it was determined that Mr. Christian Albrecht, and some attendants, should proceed to the Great Namacquas, to explore the country, and learn the disposition of the people. This was happily effected; and he returned with the joyful news, that he had discovered two fountains, which they called "the Happy deliverance," and "the Silent Hope." At the latter they shortly arrived, rejoicing in the merciful preservation they had experienced, and still more in the apparent readiness of the poor pagans to receive the gospel message. At the close of the year 1805, their work commenced in this place. They, found, however, that their settlement would be more conveniently formed at "the Happy Deliverance," which was but a few miles distant from "the Silent Hope."

Having heard that Chacab, the chief of a kraal in that neighbourhood, was inclined to receive the word, brother Sydenfaden was dispatched to the place of his residence, where, under a tree, he preached the gospel to him and his people. After the service was concluded, the chief expressed his satisfaction with what he had heard, and said—"This word is too great that we should not accept it. All the chiefs of Namacqua-land, must come hither to hear; hither must they come, under this tree, to hear; then shall they find that the word of God is great. Harmony must also prevail: all the chiefs must have one heart and mind, and accept this doctrine: then the doctrine must be established in the centre of the country, that every one may have access to it."

This declaration of a person of influence, filled the heart of the missionary with joy, which was, however, soon damped by the efforts of one Absalom, who was esteemed as a kind of sorcerer among these benighted people. This wicked man laboured to fill their minds with prejudice, and to dissuade them from paying any attention to the word; and at first, so far prevailed, that brother Sydenfaden thought his life in danger. But when he reproved him before the people, face to face, he was ashamed, trembled, and promised to make no further opposition. The chief, Chacab, declared that he was still attached to the missionary, and said, "I would fain accept the word of God. I shall come myself, snd see if the Oolam hottentots accept of it; and if they do, I shall then make it my business that all the chiefs of the whole Namacqualand shall accept it; for if I only accept it, I shall be murdered by the rest, and it will occasion a war."

This pleasing event, together with the accession of a considerable number of the hottentots from the surrounding country, determined the brethren to continue at the Happy Deliverance, notwithstanding considerable difficulties with which they had to struggle. It was found necessary to erect a building in which divine service might be held, for in the open air they were exposed to danger from venomous creatures which abound; one evening, while preaching, a serpent entwined itself about the leg of Christian Albrecht, but, happily, left him without doing any injury.

Missionary Report.

# EVENING .-- MAY 11

THE RICH SINNER'S DEATH, AND THE SAINT'S RESURRECTION.

Why do the proud insult the poor, And boast the large estates they have? How vain are riches to secure Their haughty owners from the grave!

They can't redeem one hour from death, With all the wealth in which they trust; Nor give a dying brother breath, When God commands him down to dust.

There the dark earth and dismal shade Shall clasp their naked bodies round: That flesh so delicately fed Lies cold, and moulders in the ground. Like thoughtless sheep the sinner dies, Laid in the grave for worms to eat: The saints shall in the morning rise, And find th' oppressor at their feet.

My Saviour shall my life restore, And raise me from my dark abode; My flesh and soul shall part no more, But dwell for ever near my God.

Watte

#### BRIEF DATE OF HUMAN GREATNESS. ISAIAH XXI.

4 My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.

5 Prepare the table, watch in the watch-tower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.

6 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.

7 And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

8 And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day time, and I am set in my ward

whole nights:

9 And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

10 O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the Lord of hozes, the God of Israel, have I

declared unto you.

11 The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.

13 The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanium.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him

15 For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail.

# MEDITATE ON DEATH WHILE HE IS SUPPOSED TO BE DISTANT.

How are the evanescent glories of this world pictured by the bright but vanishing flower. The flower fadeth," says the prophet Isaiah; and when we visit the garden, we can see that many roses have already lost their beauty, and that all are rapidly hastening to decay. The crocuses and auriculas, at this early period, have already yielded all that rendered them lovely to the eye, and the paleness of the daffodil, seems a funereal garment, while the glowing calvx of the tulip, lately so highly prized, sinks worthless and

dishonoured to the ground. We rejoiced when these gay and innocent children of nature, presented themselves to our view. We were pleased with their beauty, and refreshed with their fragrance. They excited lively feelings of satisfaction; they at once cheered and tended to our edification. Shall we now pass their dying bed with indifference? Though their charms are no more, we may still derive edification from their appearance, and their history.

Ye vanishing children of Flora's vast train, while gazing on your pale shroud, our minds look forward to that which must soon envelope us, and the thought shall instruct and admonish; it shall chastise our errors, and assist reflection to convert to righteousness. And surely, it is wise to avail ourselves of the emblems which Providence places in our path, and to prefer contemplating death, now, in the wasting fading flowers we behold, than to wait till the subject is forced on our attention by the bed of sickness, or the sight of the open grave.

So common sense suggests, but such the folly of mortals, that they are disposed to occupy themselves with all other things that can be mentioned, than with the awful change which awaits them, when the hour arrives in which they must leave the world. For this they have no leisure, from their being so actively engaged in shortening the days of their earthly pilgrimage, by toils and pleasures, which destroy their vital strength. Turn we from luxury and folly, to look in the face that which we cannot long escape. The more constant, the more intimate our intercourse with death, the less terrible will it appear. We shall find that it has a bright side, and cease to tremble at its gloomy and terrifying shape. Its image admitted to mingle with our daily thoughts will produce on us the most salutary effects.

Most of the evils which we have to regret, result from our being too arrogant, while our circumstances are prosperous, and too much depressed when we are overtaken by adversity. Our weakness when temptation comes, is also a frequent source of sorrow. It is in order to fortify our hearts against the perils with which, from such circumstances, we are surrounded, that we should accustom ourselves to meditate on death. Doing so, will at once abate the thoughtless presumption in which we are sometimes led to indulge; while our pusillanimity will be changed into courage, and our weakness into strength. The most unfeeling and tyrannical, are commonly

checked and restrained, when the object of their hatred is seen at the point of death; the most boisterous then become quiet, and are filled with awe, while they stand in the presence of a corpse. The flush of life by such a spectacle, is at once arrested, and the flash of the unchaste eve is extinguished.

In these respects, the influence of death is felt to be beneficial. Woe to those, who, pampered in luxury, and absorbed in dissipated pleasures, cannot admit him to their serious thoughts. Woe to those who avoid frequently conversing with him; who, deceived by the sophistry of others, or the sinfulness of their own hearts, postpone indefinitely the day of solemn reflection, and refuse to listen to the admonition supplied by all we see, by friend and foe; by the voice of reason and the word of God.

In the course of human affairs, he who ventures for great honours, must encounter formidable difficulties. He who fears to meet these, must not greatly aspire. So in regard to immortal beings; he who aspires to heaven, must prepare himself to brave all that worldly men deem fearful and undesirable. Does he wish for immortal life in a land of happiness and glory? To fit himself for this, he must accustom his mind to be familiar with the gloom of the sepulchre.

For those who forget death, how truly unenviable is their lot. Absorbed by frivolities, how weakly do they trifle their way to eternity! Cold and indifferent to the cry of distress, when they suffer in their turn, where can they look for pity, which none have known from them. Heavily are the common sorrows of humanity felt by such men, and great is the anguish which comes over them, when the thought of their own death intrudes; tremendous the alarm when they feel its actual approach.

We must not thus be surprised by our enemy. Thoughts of death be ever welcome to us! will render the King of terrors familiar to us as a friend. Fading flowers of the spring, you have usefully brought his image before us. meditations shall be the companions of life, till that day arrives, when all apprehension of death shall be stilled for ever, by death itself.

MAN'S INCAPACITY TO COMPREHEND GOD'S IMMENSITY.

The world of consciousness within, and of matter without, are at present both very superficially surveyed by the most acute and profound human intellect. This world is but a little ball which a navigator may circle, and even of this our knowledge is small; whilst all we know of the universe at large may be reduced to a few bare facts, the rest being idle

conjecture. "Hardly do we guess aright," says the wisest of the ancients, "at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?" The eccentric comet, with its enormous train, making such wild and apparently extravagant excursions in the regions of boundless space, whirling a million times swifter than cannon balls, and burning with a heat which a thousand centuries could not quench, the wonder alike of the philosoper and the clod of the valley, passes by our earth a perfect stranger, leaving us in mysterious doubt and awe respecting its origin, nature, destination, and use among the glorious works of the all-wise Creator; though, for aught we know, it may be the messenger and perhaps the agent of the most necessary purposes in creation. The topography, the history, the productions, the relations, the changes, the laws, and the intelligences even of the worlds that belong to our own solar system, are all unknown. We may lift up our eyes on high and behold him who hath created these things, but though admiration and devotion be thus exercised and gratified, each rising of curiosity is repelled, for "athwart the trackless void has not yet so much as issued the hum of their mighty population." Our knowledge is bounden by this earth's horizon, and even our knowledge of this miliary world, though accumulating for centuries, is very inadequate and insignificant. Never can the astronomer reasonably expect to advance beyond the rudiments of his science, nor the historian present us with any history save that of the microcosm, and that only an imperfect and mutilated one; nor the metaphysician descant but on the puny powers and feeble manifestations of earth-born, earth-bound, fleshly minds; nor the scientific man extend his discoveries in nature and art further than the limits of this low and little world, until, like the bird bursting its prison shell, they emerge from this confined, incipient state, enjoying in actual fruition what the poet could but realize in the flight of fancy and desire.

> " Above the crowd On upward wing could I but fly, I'd bathe in you bright cloud, And seek the stars that gem the sky."

As the greatest earthly conqueror wept because there was not another world to subdue, so may the greatest philosopher, even though he were able to attain all the knowledge attainable in this world, which with his present powers and opportunities he would be unable to do throughout eternity, to think he could advance no further and ascend no higher.

We have no direct revelation of our relationship to any other worlds besides heaven and hell. With each of these, however, we are most certainly and most intimately con-God has therefore, thought proper to give us some general ideas of both, necessarily unsatisfactory and limited, because clothed in figurative terms—the present world presenting us with no ideas which would enable us to form a correct and perfect conception of a state of being so much dissimilar from the present. This fact, however, naturally leads us to conclude that we may be connected with many other worlds, and that as we know all the varied and endless riches of the material were made, as scripture declares repeatedly, to be seen, admired, and enjoyed by rational, virtuous beings, the children of God whom he has redeemed by the blood of his own Son; who thus, in a relation to their Creator more holy, honourable, intimate, and endearing than the whole universe besides, will above all others be thus privileged and blessed. But as no mention or even positive allusion is given by scripture of such connexion, we are led to conclude that such connexion cannot be intimate and

important as with heaven and hell; for with the denizens of these worlds departed spirits are described as being familiarly associated, and the apostle says that the saints will hereafter judge angels. In what way we are related to other worlds, for what purposes, and to what degree of affinity, it is beyond our power to decide, and it would therefore be useless to Dr. Edwards. conjecture.

# MORNING.-MAY 12.

GOD'S PROMISES FIRM.

Our God, how firm his promise stands, Ev'n when he hides his face! He trusts in our Redeemer's hands His glory and his grace.

Then why, my soul, these sad complaints, Since Christ and we are one? Thy God is faithful to his saints, Is faithful to his son.

Beneath his smiles my heart has liv'd, And part of heaven possess'd; O! praise his name for grace received, And trust him for the rest.

Golden Treasury.

#### JESUS ABOUT TO SUFFER. MATTHEW XXVI.

17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep

the passover at thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them;

and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you,

That one of you shall betray me. 22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every

ne of them to say unto him, Lord is it I? 23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand

with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. 24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him, but woe

unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered, and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is

shed for many for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

### THE GLORIOUS EXAMPLE SET BY THE REDEEMER.

We are told that "Christ left us an example, and that we should follow in his steps." Of the importance of the example set by the August Founder of our faith, who can entertain a doubt. We should lose a blessing unspeakably great, when the example furnished to the world by Jesus Christ, withdraws from the contemplation of mankind; human virtue would lose its most powerful support, and wanting information respecting his holy conduct, his merciful love, his humility and goodness, and truth, which of the sons of men would know how to fashion his conduct so as to win the favour of the Almighty? How could blind incompetent man have found his way through this wilderness the world, unassisted by the protracted sacrifice made for him by Jesus; by the example placed before our eyes; by his doctrine and commandments, brought home to our understanding? It is to the animating influence of these combined, that we owe all that is most truly valuable: tranquil hope as we proceed, and beatific visions of immortal joy. purity; the sublimity; the exalted benevolence of the Saviour, so often as we reflect upon them, fill our souls with wonder and admiration, while they render us faithful to his precepts, and inspire courage to attempt their imitation.

Oh! that that example could be ever present to us! How would it fortify our hearts against those weaknesses which we too frequently feel. Then should we be ever prepared to fight and conquer, and rise superior to the trials and temptations of the world. Would that we could unceasingly look on Jesus, who has done so much to teach us firmness, circumspection, and perseverance. He has made us acquainted with the weapons of victory, and shewn us how they are to be used. He has done more, he has enabled us to understand the rewards and blessings which those who fight the good fight, will eventually call their own. These aids are all necessary to weak strugglers like ourselves, tempted as we are from day to day, and constantly engaged in incessant strife, with inclinations too prone to betray us to

May our souls, enlightened by grace, hasten to seize that strength which is offered to it in the contemplation of the course pursued by our glorious Redeemer. Be the calm determination with which he proceeded to fight the enemies of truth and salvation, our unfailing theme. Calmly and

serenely we see him advance to the conflict. the silence of solitude, he weighs all the hard trials which he had to encounter; he looks at the difficulties, the dangers and toils, inseparable from his mighty undertaking; he examines his strength and his heart, to decide whether he possesses the courage requisite to suffer, and to conquer, in the glorious cause of which he has resolved to become the advocate. Then trace him in his progress, and mark the firmness and purity with which he enters into the conflict, not seeking his own aggrandisement; not yielding a point where the interests of man are concerned; devoted in all things to the will of God. Prepared to make any sacrifice, no prospect of agony can terrify or change his purpose.

Nor is this all. Not only does he manifest unconquerable resolution, he unites with it the most sublime moral power, and a self-controul not to be shaken by any circumstance. He is not simply equal to meet the shock of sudden violence, but he can patiently bear through the tedious lapse of years, the most contumelious persecution, startling ingratitude, and revolting injustice. Yet great throughout, the Son of God, encumbered with all the infirmities of mortality, is still himself. He can behold the Saviour with compassion: the rancorous enemy with pity. His patient forbearance could not be exhausted any more than his fortitude could be overcome. His truth was firm, his courage nothing could subdue, and no opposition, no sorrow, no condemnation could for a moment shake his purpose.

When we contemplate a character like this, a character combining all that is noble in heroism; all that is amiable in meekness; brave, yet unassuming; generous, and forgiving; Oh, let it be the care of our hearts, devoutly to admire so sublime a pattern of mortal virtue! To imitate it, shall be our daring hope, our highest ambition. Vast as the distance at which we follow may be, we will strive to copy the acts of our Saviour. In all the trials and temptations of mortal life, it shall be carefully kept in view. From him we will learn how to conduct ourselves in the strife on which we must enter, with the vanities of the world. Doing so, we shall conquer, for our Lord will not refuse to grant us his assistance. His gracious promise, which he never fails to make good, is, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

#### CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES.

Impostors are moved to the attempt of deceiving mankind by prospects of wealth, fame, power, pleasure; by some real or imaginary advantage to be derived to themselves, or through them, to those whom they love and regard as themselves. Now no expectation of this kind can, with the least shadow of probability, be ascribed to all, or to any of the writers of the New Testament. There is no need of entering into the proof of this; every one knows that Jews and Romans, Greeks and barbarians; that the powers of the world, wherever they went, were against the apostles; they durst not any where lift up so much as an arm in their own defence. Instead or temporal advantages of any kind, they had to expect, and they did in fact experience hunger, and cold, and nakedness, and scorn, and contempt, and hatred, all the miseries incident to a state of poverty, all the calamities attendant on a state of religious persecution: these are not the motives which induce men to become impostors. Read the history of the impostor Mahomet, or that of Alexander as described by Lucian, or that of Apollonius of Tyana; and contrast them with that of Christ, or any of his apostles; and you will at once perceive the difference between the manner in which imposture and truth are introduced and established in the world. Compare the miracles recorded in the New Testament, with respect to their publicity, their beneficial tendency, and their influence on the thousands who saw them, with the tricks of ancient or modern pretenders to magic; and you will at once perceive the difference between cunningly devised delusions operating on fanatical minds, and the simplicity of gospel wonders extorting conviction from the most incredulous. The apostles were as destitute of ability to deceive, as of inducement to impose a fable on the world. It requires great power, or great talents, to be a successful impostor; and the difficulty is increased, when the plot cannot be carried on without the concurrence of many assistants: and especially when it is to be carried on, in opposition to men able and willing to detect the cheat. What should we think of twelve fishermen, who should now undertake to proclaim, in the hearing of the learned and unlearned, that a few years ago a certain man wrought many miracles, not only in a distant country, but in the streets and churches of the metropolis of the kingdom; not only before them, the relaters of the fact, but in the presence of thousands of others; and that this man was publicly tried by order of government, and put to death in London; and that he rose from the dead: and that after his resurrection he was seen not only by themselves, but by hundreds of others, and by some who were still alive? What should we think of such assertions, of such audacious appeals to living witnesses, when in truth this man had not risen from the dead, nor wrought any miracle whatever? What should we think of twelve fishermen, who, without understanding any language but their own, should go to Paris, Rome, Madrid, Constantinople, and endeavour to propagate the same thing? Is it credible that any men could be found so mad as to make the attempt, or that, if they did make it, they should have the good fortune to succeed in their imposition?

Bishop of Llandaff.

# EVENING.—MAY 12.

GOD ENTREATED TO RENDER MAN PERFECT.

Lord, one thing we want: More holiness grant! For more of thy mind, and thy likeness, we pant: Thine image impress On thy favourite race; Oh, fashion and polish thy vessels of grace.

Lord, take us in hand, and conform us to thee! Thy impression to bear, Thy likeness to wear.

Thy workmanship we

More plainly would be:

Be this our ambition, our study, and pray'r!

Thou hast made it our will To resemble thee still: Turn our hearts to thy spirit, as clay to the seal! While onward we move To thy Canaan above, Make us holy and humble before Thee in love.

All this shall be done; 'Tis already begun! Thou, from conqu'ring to conquer, in us wilt go on : In us, when we die, Thy grace from on high Will the finishing hand to thine image apply.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

MEN TO REMEMBER THEIR DIGNITY AS SONS OF GOD. GALATIANS IV.

1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might

receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and

if a son, then an heir of God through Christ, 8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service

unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

## THE CREATOR INDICATED BY THE POWERS OF THE CREATURE.

The Christian who contemplates the happy position in which he is placed by circumstances, the many perils which he has escaped, and the cheering prospect before him, may often see cause

to exclaim with the holy poet, "I am as a wonder to many." In the sentiment so expressed, we have a right to join, more especially when we contemplate the singular powers bestowed upon us by the Eternal, the faculty of volition, and the va rious actions of the body. In ourselves we find an epitome of the Almighty will. For us it is sufficient to feel the will, and all our limbs are instantly in motion to obey its mandate. mandate is in truth necessary. It is our pleasure that thus, and thus they should move, and before the voice of command could be heard, all that it would express is done.

It is truly marvellous in what way our wishes are fulfilled: how exactly all those manifold contractions are instantly executed, which are necessary to speech. In order to speak, the muscles, the teeth, the lips, and the throat, are severally put in requisition to give forth different sounds. They perform their part by means, of which we are unconscious. It is done the moment the thought embodied in the particular expression is conceived, though not so instantly as our will can be obeyed by our members. We do much admirably, yet know not how we do it. If we could not eat, work, digest, and sleep, before we knew intimately the complicated machinery by which all these things are brought about, we should find ourselves fearfully embarrassed; we should become almost immovable engines. We should not soon comprehend the precise rules of motion; the combined variteies of action; and when understood, we should frequently find ourselves at a loss how to apply them. We are in truth but like a child, who turns the cleverly constructed wheel of a machine, and who witnesses with surprise the effects produced from its revolutions, but cannot understand the process by which it is accomplished. Thus it is in us, and we feel ourselves among the prodigies called into being by divine wisdom.

It may be instructive and beneficial for us to enter more frequently into meditations like these, for doing so, we can never dismiss the subject without feeling renewed veneration and gratitude. for the Lord of all. Cold and insensible must we be, not to feel cheered and animated by the consideration, that helpless and feeble as we are in ourselves, so much care and exquisite contrivance has been bestowed upon us by the author of the universe. Have we, up to the present time, been in the habit of taking this view of our condition? No; far from it, we have felt from

day to day the marvellous connection subsisting between soul and body, still more important than the rest; yet seldom reflected that all was the work of God. The thought has rarely struck us that such was indeed the case, and that consequently he had a claim on our constant adoration. Conscious how much we owe to him in our formation, we ought submissively to bow before his awful throne, never presuming for a moment to arraign his wise dispensations.

In the ordinary walks of life, we often see the wonderful gifts lavished on man by the Almighty, regarded as things of course, deemed trifles of little value, or claimed as if the possessor had a right to them. Miserable fool! open thine eyes to thy original nothingness; abate the weak presumption, and humbly acknowledge the magnificent

bounty of thy God!

Lord of all creation! we thank thee for that we are so wonderfully made. When we contemplate the exquisite connection which unites us with distant worlds, we know not but, at the passing moment, angels and archangels are musing over the relations established between our bodies and souls, bewildered while they ponder on the immeasurable depth of thy wisdom—of thy goodness. Such may be their thought, while for us nothing is left but to wonder and adore.

Be it not forgotten that to us is left free will, to choose between good and evil, and they, we have capacity to know, lead to the issues of life and death; to heaven or hell. Since then we are aware of this, and can use our faculties to glorify our God, let us be ever watchful so to employ them, and resolutely eager to renounce the service of sin. A time will come when this capacity shall be ours no longer—when the choice at present open to us will have been wholly withdrawn. Oh! then, may we be wise in time, and, while it is still day, devote our hearts to thee, all gracious Father! Unto thee we resolve to live, in thee we desire to die.

MIGHTY EFFECTS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN THE HEARTS OF MEN.

The new covenant runs thus—"I will put," says God, "my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them." The heart is by nature as hard as adamant. It is enmity itself against the holy law; but the Lord here engages to take away the stony heart, and to give a heart of flesh, upon which he will write the ten commandments; not in tables of stone,

but in the fleshy tables of the heart. The Spirit of the living God will teach all his children to know their Father, he will manifest to them their adoption, he will reveal to them their Father's love in Jesus, and he will make their hearts happy in the enjoyment of it. Then the holy fruits of this love will appear towards man. It will work sweetly in benevolence, and effectually in beneficence. The love of God will open the contracted heart, enlarge the selfish, warm the cold, and bring liberality out of the covetous. When the Holy Spirit teaches brotherly love, he overcomes all opposition to it. He says to his disciples-" Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." And he makes them kind one to another: they shew it by every good word and work. Thus, by manifesting to them the Father reconciled in Jesus, and by enabling them to love man for his sake, he writes upon their hearts the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets. "The love of God," says the apostle Ghost," and to the Thessalonians, "ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." Thus he engages the affections of the soul to the holy law, and inclines the inner man to love obedience. It ceaseth to be a yoke and a burden. How easy is because the state of the state heart to God and to man, his law will then become delightful, and obedience to it will be pleasantness. The soul will run, yea, inspired by love, it will mount up with wings like eagle's, in the way of God's commandments.

Happy are the people, that are in such a case! And is it not, O my soul, in some measure thine? Hast thou not been taught to love God and his ways? Since thou hast been acquainted with him as thy loving Father in Jesus, has not thy faith been working by love to him, and to his will, and to his whole household and family? Remember this is promised. All the children of God are to be taught to know and to love their heavenly Father. This is the very tenor of the covenant grace, which the almighty spirit has undertaken to fulfi; and he cannot fail in his office: it is his crown and glory to make good his covenant engagements. Oh! trust in him then, and put honour upon his faithfulness. He has promised to guide thee with his counsel, and to strengthen thee with his might, in the way of obedience to thy reconciled

God.

Romaine.

# MORNING.—MAY 13.

ANGRY PASSIONS SUBDUED BY FAITH.

And is the gospel peace and love?
Such let our conversation be;
The serpent blended with the dove,
Wisdom and meek simplicity.

Whene'er the angry passions rise,
And tempt our thoughts or tongues to strife,
To Jesus let us lift our eyes,
Bright pattern of the Christian life!

Oh, how benevolent and kind!
How mild! how ready to forgive!
Be this the temper of our mind,
And these the rules by which we live.

To do his heavenly Father's will
Was his employment and delight;
Humility and holy zeal
Shone through his life divinely bright!

Dispensing good where'er he came,
The labours of his life were love;
Oh, if we love the Saviour's name,
Let his divine example move.

Steele.

# DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL CLAIMED FROM THE LORD. PSALM CXLIII.

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth

after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the nit

8 Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto

thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

11 Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake; for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

#### FAITH PROMPTS TO DISINTERESTED LOVE.

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard, nothing shall be impossible to you." This was declared to his followers by the Redeemer of man. The assurance is most important, and true we have often found it, when that dear word faith, has enabled a sincere Christian to accomplish seeming impossibilities.

Faith leads us to appreciate sacred truths, and these animate, comfort, and refresh the soul. They point out the road to heaven, while they explain to us the riches of God, and the glorious mystery of his love for mankind. Thoroughly insignificant appears all the knowledge and acquirements which give men distinction in this world, when placed in comparison with the beneficent influence and wonder-working power of Would to God that our faith were ever vigorous and active, lively and joyful—that fears were strangers to the purified bosom, and doubt unknown! Oh! that our minds were prepared to bear the strictest scrutiny that could be instituted, to determine whether or not they were wanting in faith! In such a case, feeling as we ought, we should constantly be exerting ourselves in works of love. Then how much more should

we enjoy the blessings brought by divine bounty within our reach. Our hearts would be full of courage, and rich in comfort and immortal hope. Great then our happiness; tormenting fears would cease to disturb, our cares would be diminished, and our burthens lightened. No trials would exhaust our energies, and we should advance with cheerful confidence, even through dark, rugged, and dangerous paths, feeling that for our protection our Almighty Father was all-sufficient.

In circumstances of difficulty, faith—true, undoubting faith-would never fail to supply a vivid exhortation to the suffering man. It would teach him to endure any mortal affliction he might know with becoming fortitude, and to wait with patient hope for the coming moment of relief. It would sternly enjoin us to inviolable fidelity in the discharge of every duty, and inspire in our hearts a love which seeks not its own worldly gratification, but only that which may find favour in the eyes of its eternal Author,-a love which would give that evenness of mind which no ordinary accident could irritate; which would have no wish to heap up treasures, other than those which may be enjoyed in heaven, and seeks no reward of meaner importance than the promised boon of everlasting life, which it would learn to wait for with lively hope.

Acting thus, as heirs of glory, we need not doubt that God will bless his heritage. He will lift them up when they appear most cast down, and bid them flourish in heavenly knowledge. Thus shall the trusting heart be comforted, and the chosen people of the Lord made joyful. We shall gradually be prepared to join with the general assembly of the born again, in a more exalted worship above the sky; where the noblest types and images will be thrown aside, only to give place to the bright and everlasting reality.

Let it then be our ceaseless object to render our faith firm, by constantly living in Christ. We will show that it wakes in us that love which ought to flow from it, by works of charity and kindness to all around. We will nourish our faith by musing on the various dispensations of Providence, and listen attentively at all times to the voice of the heart, but most especially in those moments which we appropriate to exercises of devotion.

Happily we have already had experience that a life cheered by faith is rich in enjoyment. To know a sincere anxiety for the well-being of

others-to be devoted to the happiness of our brethren-to feel that we have not omitted such works of charity as it was in our power to perform, precludes us from feeling weariness and sorrow, while, on the contrary, it swells the heart with holy exultation and blissful hope. That source of happiness,—thanks be to him through whom we learnt to prize it !--is ours, and to that we hope frequently to recur for new draughts of spiritual consolation. Severely as we may be tried by painful disappointments, where our fondest hopes were engaged; sad as we may feel that our anxious prayers to the Lord of all remain apparently unregarded, though our ardour may be abated, it shall never sink, and become a dead faith. From time to time it shall be rekindled, satisfied that it has a solid foundation in the word of God. The promises there found-the nature of man's soul-its various faculties, aspirings, and wants-all prove that the hope within us is no idle fantasy. Any doubts that would disturb our belief, we will learn to wrestle with and to conquer. We will unceasingly watch, that our souls may not be surprised by the tempter. Persevering always in prayer, we are thus in the end to gain a perfect triumph over all the vanities and wickedness of the world. To hold ourselves above its most captivating allurements shall be our study. Its delusions shall no more prevail over our understandings. Deign, O Lord! to assist us, that glorious victory may be ours, to the honour of thy name, and the salvation of our immortal souls.

#### TRUE RELIGION IDENTIFIED WITH MERCY.

There are no principles which exercise such deep and extensive influence in the soul, or which possess such inextinguishable vitality, or display such undying, never-yielding endurance, determination, and conflict as those of a religious complexion. Hence, there are no jealousies and feuds so easily kindled, and when once aroused, so unappeasable, no wars so cruel and impious, no usurpation so presuming, no tyranny so detestable and destructive, as ecclesiastical. Alas! for the peace-breathing and peace-bringing religion of the Prince of Peace! His professed church has been at war, when all the world has been at peace; and whilst nations, such as France and England, from being deadly rivals and foes, have become friends, and only spoke and thought of war to deprecate and deplore, these christian, or rather unchristian belligerents, have continued to assail each rival sect with dogmatic assumption of infallibility, and with a spirit of unrelenting fury. Not content with accumulating censures, and excommunications, and execrations, they have determined to outvie in hatred and hostility, the most bloodthirsty of warriors, who have but sought the destruction of the body; and with wrath more burning than Ætna's lava, with infinite melediction and malevolence, and with imprecations that

might put to shame the common swearer, they consigned their superiors in piety and angelic and divine esteem, to the ever-increasing torments of damnation. Let every government, however really insensible to the true spirit of christianity, be governed by rules of policy, and beware of lighting such fires, lest they spread and scorch; or of calling from the misty deep such a gust, lest it swell into a hurricane, and scatter universal desolation. Every species of persecution has always involved in it an element of self-defeat. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." Though victors and spoilers even for centuries, that sword which they have sacreligiously dared to wrest out of the hands of the King of Zion, has eventually pierced their own flesh; and however blunt its edge has appeared, or has actually been in the hands of those by whom it has been thus wielded, it has ever proved sharp and severe when whetted and edged by avenging Omnipotence, and returned into their own quivering bosom.

Dr. Edwards.

### EVENING.—MAY 13.

#### THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

Unclean! unclean! and full of sin,
From first to last, O Lord, I've been!
Deceitful is my heart:
Guilt presses down my burthen'd soul;
But Jesus can the waves control,
And bid my fears depart.

When first I heard his word of grace.
Ungratefully I hid my face,—
Ungratefully delayed:
At length his voice more powerful came,
"Tis I," he cried, "I, still the same;
Thou need'st not be afraid."

My heart was chang'd; in that same hour My soul confessed his mighty power; Out flowed the briny tear: I listen'd still to hear his voice; Again he said, "In me rejoice; Tis I—thou need'st not fear."

"Unworthy of thy love!" I cried
"Freely I love," he soon replied,
"On me thy faith be staid:
On me for every thing depend;
I'm Jesus, still the sinner's friend,—
Thou need'st not be afraid."

Jesse.

#### THE EVIL OF LIFE'S VANITIES. ECCLES. VI.

1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

3 ¶ If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul

be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known any thing: this hath more rest than the other.

6 ¶ Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

7 All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath

the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

9 ¶ Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

11 Seeing there be many things that increase vanity,

what is man the better?

12 For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man shall be after him under the sun?

## THE WASTE OF OUR TIME A SIN AGAINST GOD.

"Let every man prove his own work," was the precept given by the apostle, to the Galatians, for the regulation of their lives. The like injunction we are to consider is laid upon us, and the calm silence of the evening hour, is peculiarly fitted for a work at once so solemn and so salutary. The labour, the bustle, and ever-recurring cares of the day, do not allow us the same favourable opportunities for looking into ourselves; but now, without interruption, we can give up

our minds to holy thoughts.

What do we find—(the question is not unimportant)-in "proving our own works?" When we examine our souls, what impressions do we find have been made by the events of the past day-by its joys and pains, its hopes and its regrets? Dare we inquire whether our passions and desires have not received some dangerous nutriment, or taken a direction which, if not speedily counteracted, will be likely to lead us from God and Christ, and possibly cause, in the end, our everlasting ruin? Dare we make this inquiry, and demand from ourselves an account of the manner in which we have employed the time granted to us by our Lord, and to what extent we have availed ourselves of the opportunities offered to us for doing good? Sad is the response which conscience is constrained to make. It tells that we have done what we ought not to have done, and omitted to do what we ought to have performed. The sentence it pronounces is

we harden not ourselves into callous indifference against its accusations.

It should always have been our care to guard against our souls being estranged to God, remembering, that all our senses were given to us, and with them the high advantage of the Christian revelation, for great and good purposes, that we might worthily employ them to some important end. Such powers as we are endowed with, ought not to be misapplied. It ought not to be deemed a venial offence that we waste our days in trifling pursuits. We should aim at something higher than pastime, and only indulge in amusements which are necessary to refresh the mind, or to aid our views in working out plans of benevolence for the benefit of our fellow mortals.

Such should be our thoughts; but how seldom do these occur to us when profit allures or pleasure invites. Each day brings with it its reproaches. Oh! that we could at last rejoice in living through one day, without in a single instance succumbing to evil desires, or giving ourselves up to sinful actions! Even this day, duties which we ought to have fulfilled have been neglected. Our hands, our hearts, our heads, our tongues, have all failed to labour as they ought to have done, for his glory who called them to his service. They ventured on that which they were forbidden to touch, and we have been misled by the distractions of the world. Its vain delights have captivated our eyes, which have been turned from heaven, while thoughts the bosom of a Christian ought not to harbour, have grown up in our souls with rank luxuriance, and we have been led into familiar intercourse dangerous to our immortal interests, with idlers, with godless worshippers of Mammon, with the votaries of dissipation,-in a word, with men whom the voice of conscience, and the words of the Bible, alike command us to avoid.

The necessary consequences of such associations we have to deplore. We feel that we did not regard the Lord when he spoke to us through friend or foe, through good or evil, through sunshine or through rain, through the flower, or

through the weed.

nities offered to us for doing good? Sad is the response which conscience is constrained to make. It tells that we have done what we ought not to have done, and omitted to do what we ought to have performed. The sentence it pronounces is condemnatory, we cannot but shrink to hear it, if

an indulgence should be granted to mortal cravings. We cannot retrace the steps we regret that we have taken; we cannot cancel the debt we have contracted, the record which appears against us in the book of the eternal Judge.

But yet, O heart! though it is not permitted thee to arrest time on his course, and correct the fearful errors into which thou hast been betraved, still it is not for thee to despair. Self-justified thou canst not be, but Christ justifies those who call upon him for his blessing and support. If, sincere repentance being thine, thou lookest on the cross, that land-mark for sinners, with faith and confidence, and if, for the time to come, thou art careful to amend thy ways, to adopt good principles of conduct, and repel the harlot-like allurements of sin,-if thou henceforth awake to the value of time, and fly from that perversion of reason which would tempt thee to throw it away on vicious objects and unworthy pursuits, forgiveness shall not be denied thee, and thy Saviour will be prepared to say to thee Oh! word of peace!-"Go, and sin no more." As the shipwrecked mariner clings with instinctive eagerness to the floating mast which may save him from sinking beneath the foaming waves, so do we cling to the saving hope thus graciously encouraged; and great and good Father! earnestly we implore thee this night to assist us with thy blessed aid, in attempting to efface, by true repentance, the remembrance of our trespasses, that before thy dread throne, our trembling souls may find mercy.

#### THE RICH REWARD OF FAITH.

But why do I speak of serving thee, when by a most astonishing condescension, even thou, the mighty God, art pleased to serve me? For this is the effect of that excellently good providence, which hath contrived and ordered heaven and earth, and all the creatures in such a manner, that they should be useful and beneficial to mankind; which hath appointed blessed spirits above for guards and ministers to the heirs of salvation; and, which is most surprising, when thou thyself, for my sake, hadst taken upon thee the form of a servant, and wert made a frail, an afflicted man! When thou didst give thy life for undone sinners, and still dost give thyself in grace, and hast engaged to give thyself, even the full and eternal fruition of thy glorious Godhead, to every sincere believer.

O! that it were in my power to make a suitable return, for love which passes, not my thanks only, but even my knowledge! O! that my ways were made so direct, that my whole life might be one continued act of gratitude and obedience! Nay, such is my infirmity, that I must be content to wish, that any one day of that life might be employed as it ought in thy service. I know, O Lord, that thou art worthy to receive all duty, and honour, and praise for ever. I am sensible that thou art my rightful Lord, and I thy poor servant: that the utmost I can do is thy just due, and that I ought to take unspeakable delight in thanking and obeying thee; that nothing else but this should give me any satisfaction, and that when I have laid myself out entirely upon it, I still have done too little. This is the real persuasion, this is the earnest desire of my soul; and where my power falls short of my inclination, there do thou, I beseech thee, strengthen and supply what is wanting, by thy grace, that my deeds and deportment may bear testimony and proportion to my pious

To be the meanest of thy servants is the highest advancement; to despise and forsake all for thee is true riches and honour. They who thus enter themselves into thy family, and cheerfully undertake this task, shall have a glorious reward; and will feel the pleasures of this world infinitely paid, infinitely outdone, by the better and larger amends of grace and divine comforts in exchange. They who thus bind themselves to thee, that abandon worldly cares, and attend to the one thing necessary, attain to true and generous freedom of soul; and the strait way of thy commandments, is the only perfect law of liberty. O happy confinement! which sets men at large from the slavery of sin, from worldly cares and incumbrances, from the insupportable tyranny of unruly appetites and domineering passions! O blessed dependance! which makes us of the most high God's retinue, raises us up to a level with the angels, renders us dear to the Almighty, a terror to evil spirits, conquerors over our greatest and fiercest enemy, and recommends us to the love, the praise, the imita-tion of all good men. Who would not greedily embrace such a service, where the very work is pleasant, the encouragements paid down in hand noble and great, and the wages promised in recompense for our labours, happiness exquisite, unspeakable, and everlasting?

Thomas à Kempis.

# MORNING.-MAY 14.

THE PRESENCE OF THE SAVIOUR CAN MAKE DEATH

Beset with snares on every hand, In life's uncertain path I stand: Saviour divine! diffuse thy light To guide my doubtful footsteps right.

Engage this roving treach'rous heart To fix on Mary's better part, To scorn the trifles of a day, For joys that none can take away.

Then let the wildest storms arise; Let tempests mingle earth and skies; No fatal shipwrecks shall I fear But all my treasures with me bear.

If thou, my Jesus! still be nigh, Cheerful I live, and joyful die; Secure, when mortal comforts flee, To find ten thousand worlds in thee.

Dr. Doddridge.

WATCH AND BE PREPARED TO DIE. MATTHEW XXIV.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

29 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken

44 Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye

think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord nath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh

shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken:

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of.

# THE CHRISTIAN RISES ABOVE THE FEAR OF DEATH.

That which is most certain would often seem from the action of men to be least remembered, least known. Many men in their general conduct seem to live as if they had no suspicion that they were ever to die. In the Bible we read the solemn announcement. "It is appointed to man once to die, but after this the judgment." The declaration is a stern one, and it is pregnant with important meaning. It admonishes us to turn our thoughts to serious things. From us, far, far be the folly, which affects to despise the coming event, and refuses to acknowledge the importance of our departure from this world. Blind and obdurate we would not be. We own it is of immense importance, and ought to be regarded with reverential awe; but far from our bosoms be that dreary unbelief which does not recognise in our leaving the world, our progress towards a higher state of being, the last step towards a better, brighter world, our final destination.

We utterly repel the idea that this life is a mere existence, which begins and ends here, and has no higher object than sensual enjoyment, and far be from us that repining discontent, which sees in life nothing but an irksome burthen. We would not so degrade life. While we look to greater happiness than this world can afford, we are not so insolently ungrateful to the Author of our being, as to treat with contempt the boon of existence already conceded. To him who gave us life; to him who has hitherto preserved us, we owe all thankfulness.

We will prize life, because it is his gift; but while we do so, each succeeding day shall see us strive assiduously to be duly awake to the importance of remembering, "that it is appointed to men once to die, and after this the judgment." We will use our best efforts to prepare for the great change, by regarding death but as the passage to an eternal existence. We shall thus gain a cheerful picture of the King of Terrors, and regard the last enemy as a friend, whom in our case the Lord of all sends as a messenger of peace. Such he comes to those who have fought the good fight, with unyielding courage; and he appears as a benefactor to all his true worshippers, who are weary and heavy laden.

Death only appears dreadful to those who have neglected to prepare for his reception. It is indeed dreadful when it comes to disturb our worldly peace and happiness, if the terrified victim, with but to omuch reason, can only anticipate that anguish and interminable sorrow must follow. He causes mortal suffering; the separation of husbands and wives; the mourning of widows and orphans; the breaking up of valued connections. In all such cases, death must be viewed with grief; the more afflicting if the bereaved loses sight of the benevolence of the Deity, and forgets that he who causes this woe, will in due season send also relief. That remembered, our confidence in eternal wisdom, reconciles us to our present loss, and enables us to rejoice again.

The Christian is truly informed that the Lord will come quickly. He will come by death to open the door of the grave for our admittance. It is thus that all that live must pass to the invisible world. All must subsequently appear at the universal judgment. It may be that hundreds or thousands of what we term years, intervene, and must pass before the great day shall arrive, but what are these in the eye of him who is identified with eternity. Though many centuries may first elapse, he may still, in reference to the nature of his own existence, be correctly spoken of as coming quickly.

As Christians, we know that the decomposition to which we are subjected, that the apparent destruction of the grave is but apparent, and that by the Almighty will, a new and blissful life issues out of what we call death. Even the body becomes matured for its transfiguration by its dissolution. The separations of which it is the cause. are made up, and more than made up to us by an introduction to higher and more glorious connections. Knowing so much, what is there to startle us in the gloomy gate of death? By the power and the light of faith, we are enabled to see it in a proper point of view, and to regard it but as the entrance into the dwelling of our father, who has been pleased to call us home. So that our consciences be good, and pure, and the soul has not ceased to strive after its sanctification, if we only secure by the means placed within our reach that bliss which heaven offers to the true worshippers of God, by daily self-examination, by a prudent controul of our passions, and resolute self-denial, we trust, cheered by a prospect of lasting happiness beyond the grave, that to us the last hour of this worldly existence shall cause no dismay. Sustained by holy meditation, we hope that then joyous confidence will be ours, and our parting thought, thanks be to God who has given us the victory by our Lord Christ Jesus.

#### THE REST EVERLASTING.

Is there a time approaching when this body shall be carried out upon the bier, and consigned to its clay-cold bed? While some kind acquaintance, perhaps, may drop one parting tear, and cry, Alas! my brother! Is the time approaching? Nothing is more certain. A decree much surer than the law of the Medes and Persians, has irrevocably determined the doom.

Should one of these ghastly figures burst from his confinement, and start up in frightful deformity before me-should the haggard skeleton lift a clattering hand, and point it full in my view-should it open the stiffened jaws-and, with a hoarse tremendous murmur, break this profound silenceshould it accost me, as Samuel's apparition addressed the trembling king—"The Lord shall deliver thee also into the hands of death: yet a little while, and thou shalt be with me." The solemn warning, delivered in so striking a manner, must strongly impress my imagination; a message in thunder would scarce sink deeper. Yet there is abundantly greater reason to be alarmed, by that express declaration of the Lord God Almighty, "Thou shalt surely die." Well then, since sentence is passed-since I am a condemned man, and know not when the dead warrant may arrive-let me die to sin, and die to the world, before I die beneath the stroke of a rightcous God. Let me employ the little uncertain interval of respite from execution, in preparing for a happier state, and a better life. That when the fatal moment comes, and I am commanded to shut my eyes upon all things here below, I may open them again to see my Saviour in the mansions

Since this body, which is so fearfully and wonderfully made, must fall to pieces in the grave; since I must soon resign all my bodily powers to darkness, inactivity, and corruption, let it be my constant care to use them well, while I possess them! Let my hands be stretched forth to relieve the needy; and always be more "ready to give, than to receive." Let my knees bend in deepest humiliation before the throne of grace; while my eyes are cast down to the earth in penitential confusion, or devoutly looking up to heaven for pardoning mercy! In every friendly interview, let the "law of kindness dwell on my lips;" or rather, if the seriousness of my acquaintance permits, let the gospel of peace flow from my tongue. O! that I might be enabled, in every public concourse, to lift up my voice like a trumpet, and pour abroad a more joyful sound than its most melodious accents, in proclaiming the glad tidings of free salvation! Be shut, my ears, resolutely shut, against the malevolent whispers of slander, and the contagious breath of filthy talking. But be swift to hear the instructions of wisdom; be all attention when your Redeemer speaks; imbibe the precious truths, and convey them carefully to the heart. Carry me, my feet, to the temple of the Lord, to the beds of the sick, and houses of the poor. May all my members, devoted entirely to my divine Master, be the willing instruments of promoting his glory!

Then, ye embalmers, ye may spare your pains. These works of faith, and labours of love, these shall be my spices and perfumes. Enwrapped in these, I would lay me gently down, and sleep sweetly in the blessed Jesus, hoping that God will "give commandment concerning my bones;" and one day fetch them up from the dust, as silver from the furnace, purified. "I say, not seven times, but seventy times seven."

Hervey

# EVENING.—MAY 14.

THE BED OF DEATH.

What scenes of horror and of dread Await the sinner's dying bed! Death's terrors all appear in sight, Presages of eternal night.

His sins in dreadful order rise, And fill his soul with sad surprise; Mount Sinai's thunder stuns his ears, And not one ray of hope appears.

Tormenting pangs distract his breast Where'er he turns, he finds no rest: Death strikes the blow; he groans and cries, And. in despair and horror, dies.

Not so the heir of heavenly bliss;— His soul is fill'd with conscious peace; A steady faith subdues his fear! He sees the happy Canaan near.

His mind is tranquil and serene; No terrors in his looks are seen; His Saviour's smile dispels the gloom, And smooths his passage to the tomb.

Lord! make my faith and love sincere, My judgment sound, my conscience clear; And, when the toils of life are past, May I be found in peace at last.

Rippon's Selection

#### THE SAVIOUR'S WARNING VOICE. MATTHEW, XIII.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the

good seed is the Son of man:

38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked onc;

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest

is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the

fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall

be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear.

# A GOOD LIFE NECESSARY TO CAUSE A HAPPY DEATH.

It has often been insisted, that death, to the virtuous, is happiness. In holy writ we are told, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." This cannot be denied; it cannot be doubted, but evermore ought it to be remembered, that those only can die in the Lord who live in the Lord, and who devoutly pass their days in pious endeavours to render themselves acceptable in his sight, and in the fond expectation of being requited with eternal life. We must, then, with solemn anxiety, ask, "Do we belong to that number, and could we, if apprised by a messenger from the world of spirits, that this night would prove the last we can pass on earth, calmly retire to bed, and compose ourselves to sleep in the Lord, in the confident, and, as we are persuaded, well-founded hope, that it would be ours to awake to never-ending happiness?" Though serious, the thought ought not to be melancholy. We ought not weakly to decline entertaining it, and seek to escape by dwelling on the improbability of the close of our earthly career being so close at hand. The possibility of it cannot for a moment be questioned, and the incidents which we name chance and accident, being wholly beyond our power, why may not this very night be that of our decease? Answer these, thou immortal soul within, should death come thus suddenly upon thee, couldst thou believe that it would introduce thee to everlasting glory? Has thy course been so correct, that thou hast no cause for apprehension? Have thy duties been so well performed, that thou canst feel prepared unshrinkingly to encounter the all-seeing eye? Hast thou paid the debts of gratitude which were due to thee for so many blessings heaped upon thee by thy Creator's bounty? Say, hast thou done all that thou wast ordered to do? Hast thou faithfully discharged the duties of thy vocation-hast thou been just and kind to thy relations, to thy friends, to thine enemies? Say, art thou thoroughly persuaded that thou hast in no instance moved resentment rather than gratitude. and merited that a curse rather than a blessing should follow the remains of the body which thou hast animated, to its last resting place? Declare, O soul! in a word, dost thou indeed feel, that thou hast made thy calling and election sure, and that the Lord thy God will receive thee as "a good and faithful servant?" Say, hast thou believed him, hast thou obeyed him, and hast thou served him through life in righteousness, These questions with love and veneration? put to our hearts, gracious God! how insufficient do we feel the preparations we have made for dying! We dare not pronounce, that if our breath were stopped this night, divine mercy could with justice permit us to reach that blessed home, to which the zealous persevering Christian may fearlessly look forward.

Great is the mercy we feel we have to acknowledge, on looking back to the past, which yet spares us to repent the trespasses against heaven into which, by our own evil inclinations, we have been betrayed. We have to tender our warmest acknowledgments for such a manifestation of continued love.

Leading a life of piety, we ought to be especially on our guard against doing any thing that may tend to throw discredit on religion. We must not be too indulgent to our frailties. Often have we heard of parents injuring their children by undue tenderness. We must be careful not to imitate their weakness, and, by sparing our own faults, to encourage their growth and increase. To be severe, even upon venial errors, is necessary, for he that neglects small offences against God, is in a dangerous way, and may, little by little, become an awful offender.

Called upon at once to take the long journey which lies before us—forced on our passage to eternity—being ordered to die this night, can we deny that appalling doubts and terrors would assail our startled consciences? On whatever

side we look, new subjects for alarm present themselves. Unhappy that we are, we feel that we deserve to be pursued by divine vengeance. Rocks threaten to fall upon our guilty heads, floods rise to overwhelm, and we tremble at the prospect of being lost for ever. To die! Is the hour already arrived in which we must resign our breath! Just God! whither shall we fly? How can we escape from the avenging word—how remove from thy awful presence? Whither can we turn in our dying agonies? To thee, Oh Lord our God! only to thee, our Father, in Christ.

THE SOUL TO BE GUARDED AGAINST SLEEPING IN FALSE SECURITY.

Methinks it is the most pitiful sight this world affords, to see such an ungodly person dying, and to think of his soul and his hopes departing together. With what a sad change he appears in another world! Then if a man could but ask that hopeless soul, "Are you as confident of salvation as you were wont to be?" what a sad answer would be returned. O that careless sinners would be awakened to think of this in time! Reader, rest not till thou canst give a reason of all thy hopes grounded upon scripture promises; that they purify thy heart! that they quicken thy endeavours in godliness; that the more thou hopest the less thou sinnest, and the more exact is thy obedience. If thy hopes be such as these, go on in the strength of the Lord, hold fast thy hope, and never shall it make thee ashamed. But if thou hast not one sound evidence of a work of grace on thy soul, cast away thy hopes. Despair of ever being saved except thou be born again; or of seeing God without holiness; or of having part of Christ, except thou love him above father or mother, or thy own life. This kind of despair is one of the first steps to heaven. If a man be quite out of his way, what must be the first means to bring him in again? He must despair of ever coming to his journey's end in the way that he is in. If his home be eastward, and he is going westward, as long as he goes on hoping, he goes further amiss. When he despairs of coming home, except he turn back, he will then return, and then he may hope. Just so it is, sinner, with thy soul; thou art born out of the way of heaven, and hast proceeded many a year: thou goest on and hopest to be saved, because thou art not so bad as many others. Except thou throwest away those hopes, and suest that thou hast all this while been quite out of the way to heaven, thou wilt never return and be saved. There is nothing in the world more likely to keep thy soul out of heaven, than thy false hopes of being saved while thou art out of the way to salvation. See then how it will aggravate the misery of the damned, that with the loss of heaven they shall lose all that hope of it which now supports them.

They will lose all that false peace of conscience which makes their present life so easy. Who would think, that sees how quietly the multitude of the ungodly live, that they must very shortly lie down in everlasting flames! They are as free from the fears of hell as an obedient believer; and for the most part have less disquiet of mind than those who shall be saved. Happy men, if this peace would prove lasting! "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh

upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." O cruel peace, which ends in such a war! The soul of every man by nature is Satan's garrison: all is at peace in such a man till Christ comes, and gives it terrible alarms of judgment and hell, batters it with the ordnance of his threats and terrors, forces it to yield to his mere mercy, and take him for the governor: then doth he cast out Satan, "overcome him, take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils," and then doth he establish a firm and lasting peace. If, therefore, thou art yet in that first peace, never think it will endure. Can thy soul have lasting peace, in enmity with Christ? Can he have peace against whom God proclaims war?

Baxter.

# MORNING.—MAY 15.

GOD'S GLORY SEEN IN MEN'S SALVATION.

Father, how wide thy glory shines!
How high thy wonders rise!
Known thro' the earth by thousand signs,
By thousand thro' the skies.

Those mighty orbs proclaim thy pow'r,
Their motions speak thy skill;
And on the wings of every hour,
We read thy patience still.

But when we view thy great design, To save rebellious worms; Where vengeance and compassion join, In their divinest forms.

Now the full glories of the Lamb Adorn the heav'nly plains, Bright angels learn Emanuel's name And try their choicest strains.

O may I bear some humble part
In that immortal song!
Wonder and joy shall tune my heart,
And love command my tongue.

Burder's Collection.

GOD'S GOODNESS THE THEME OF REJOICING WHILE
WE LIVE. PSALM CIV.

24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

27 These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season,

28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust

30 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

31 The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

32 He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth

the hills, and they smoke. 33 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing

praise to my God while I have my being. 34 My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in

STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND TRUE ENJOYMENT, FOUND IN DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

Amidst the doubts and fears which sometimes come over us, we should still preserve our humility and reverence, for "The Lord will bless them that fear him, both small and great." None can feel this more truly than the Christian worshipper of the Lord God of Israel. The joys which the righteous know, are real bliss, and as they are the purest, so are they the most exquisite that the heart can prove. Of that we have had blessed experience; and it ought constantly to wake in us a lively consciousness of the felicity growing on a knowledge of our Redeemer's love, and from joining in his praise. Through whom but the Saviour are we enabled to worship our Creator, with that assurance and pious confidence which warms our hearts, when we approach his altar? Truly grateful ought we to feel for the privilege of addressing our supplications to God, a privilege of which no tyrant can rob us, of which no mischance can deprive us, and which affords the more enjoyment, the oftener it is resorted to, and no time, while we retain our senses, can take it away. The exercise of our minds revives our vital strength; it renews hope and courage, and, rightly understood, an advantage so bright and so substantial, cannot fail to kindle, in a heart awake to truth and virtue, the liveliest emotions of gratitude. It is that which, more than any other, indisputably proves man of divine origin, and that his ultimate destination is in heaven. We feel that it has the effect of instantly elevating the heart, and lifts us nearer to God, by disclosing to us the riches of his unbounded love. The prayer of a true and faithful Christian, raises the soul in a wonderful manner, above all things earthly. The concerns of this world become insignificant, and disappear before the spiritual eye, which, piercing the future, is cheered with beatific visions of immortal glory. To the faithful worshipper, all heaven is opened, and his feelings,

his thoughts, his hopes, sublimely rise to their eternal Author.

As the happy consequence of this, his faith becomes more perfect, more exalted, and celestial objects alone seem worthy of his attention. His sole wish is, that through his Savjour's merits, he may gain the favour of God, and find that his

prayers are heard.

In a worldly sense, it may safely be affirmed, that it is wisdom to be pious. Devotional exercises we have always found increase our strength and revive our courage, bravely to sustain ourselves in the fight, and strenuously to grapple with misfortune. This we feel now: this we have ever felt after raising our thoughts to God in humble supplication; and we feel assured that his all-powerful aid will not be wanting at the important juncture in which we most require support from above; his grace and mercy will bestow upon us all that we can ask.

Though turning our eyes on the past, recalling our own acts, as we look but on a barren wilderness. we feel that the severe justice of the Deity might withdraw from us every comfort we possess; but we also feel that we may hope for forgiveness from the holy one. We indeed are assured that the mighty debt we owed has been remitted. Adored for ever be the name of the Lord, for his abounding mercy. Henceforth, may our gratitude. may our reason, devote all we can command to the service of our august Maker. May his pure and soul-elevating spirit, render us faithful stewards, and may we never think of any worldly interest of our own, that can for a moment interfere with our duty to him.

We have reason thankfully, and with rational exultation, to own that the Father of all ordains nothing which does not eventually further the benefit and advancement of his children. Assisting in public worship we distinctly recognize as a source of immediate comfort. Its results are most agreeable. Joining with our brethren in the house of God to hymn the Almighty's praise, we feel our souls lifted above the things of time, and experience a most lively consciousness of the high privilege extended to us, when we can engage in holy exercises, and trace the path which leads to heaven. The resolute performance of a Christian's duty assuages sorrow, calms the troubled mind, and soothes the mourner. The bitterest grief by such a course is alleviated, and rendered bearable. Complaints and sighs are no longer heard and harrassing doubts give way to joyous certainty, when the full power of faith is exerted in our bosoms. How great! Oh, how ineffable is our happiness when we contemplate our salvation in Christ! To that pitch of ardent devotion, grant, O Lord! that we now, henceforth, and for ever, may constantly be wrought.

THE TRUE OBJECT OF MAN'S CREATION, AND HIS DUTY.

When we come to any reasonable measure of understanding, the first question we propound concerning the actions of ourselves, or others, is to enquire concerning the end, why this or that is done; and the propounding of an end to what we do, is one thing that gives us reasonable creatures a privilege above the beasts: and the wiser we grow, the more we enquire after, and propound to ourselves more excellent ends, and of the more concernment.

The end which most concerns us to enquire after, is the end of our being—why, or for what end we were made: for as that is the thing of the greatest moment to us, so the ignorance or mistake therein, is of the greatest danger.

Now touching this end of man, we must know.

1. That in all wise workers that act by deliberation and choice, the appointment of the end of any work belongs to him that makes it.

2. Inasmuch therefore as mankind is in its original the workmanship of God, therefore it belongs to him to appoint the end of his own workmanship; and of him it must be

inquired

3. That inasmuch as God is the wisest worker, and inasmuch as mankind is a piece of excellent workmanship, it becomes the wisdom of God, as to appoint man to an end of his own designing, so to appoint him to an end answerable to the excellency of the work, an end as much above other creatures, as man exceeds them in worth and excellency.

So that certainly man is ordained by God to an end, and to an excellent end, beyond the condition of other inferior creatures; for we see them all appointed for the use and service of man, to feed, and clothe, and heal, and delight him.

What therefore is common to the beasts as well as man, cannot be the end of man. The beasts eat, and drink, and live, and propagate their kind with as much delight, and much more contentment than man: they are free from cares and from fears, which man is not, and though they die, so doth man also: therefore to live, and eat, and drink, and perpetuate their kind, is too low an end for man. And if so, then much more is it below him to make wealth, and honour, and power, his end: for they are but in order to his temporal life here, either to provide for it, or to secure it: and besides that, they cannot answer the desires and continuance of an immortal soul, which man bears with him: and hence grows the weariness, and vexation, and unquietness, and restlessness of man, in the midst of all wealth, and honours, and pleasures: therefore, there is some other end, to which man was appointed. Which is, 1. In reference to God, to glorify him. 2. In reference to man; an everlasting enjoyment of God.

1. To glorify God, two things are considerable.

1. What it is for man to glorify God.

 There is a glorifying of God, common to all the works of God, inasmuch as they all bear in them the visible footsteps of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. Thus the sun and heavens glorify God, Psalm xix. 2. There is a glorifying of God properly belonging to intellectual creatures, angels, and men.

i. In his understanding, whereby he learns to know God

in his word, and in his works, his power, goodness, wisdom, and truth; and with his heart admires, and with his tongue praiseth him.

2. In his will; whereby he submits to him, worships, fears him, and in the course of his life, obeys him; whereby he acknowledgeth his sovereignty, and submits to it, Psalm l. 23. "He that offereth praise, glorifieth him, and to him that ordereth his conversion aright, will I shew the salvation of God." Both these are imperfectly done here, but shall be perfectly done in the life to come.

Hale's Contemplations.

# EVENING.-MAY 15.

LET THE GRATEFUL HEART REJOICE.

Whither, O sweet lark! whither away, Soaring so high in the dawning grey? I see thee not, but I hear thy voice, Singing aloud, "Rejoice! rejoice!"

As long as the fields and the woods are green, The breezes soft, and the sky serene, Happy art thou, O bird of morn! Greeting the beam o'er the far hills borne.

O for a wing and a voice like thine, To revel and sing in the morning shine! O for a spirit untouched by care, A soul unworn by the world's despair!

Floating aloft on thy russet wing, Pleasant to thee are the days of spring; Thou hast no sorrow to make thee moan, For sorrow is man's, and man's alone!

Whither, O sweet lark! whither away Soaring so high in the dawning grey? I see thee not, but I hear thy voice, Singing aloud, "Rejoice! rejoice!"

Mackay.

SEEK GOD BETIMES. JOB VIII.

5 If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

6 If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

7 Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

8 For enquire, I pray thee of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

9 For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:

10 Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart.

11 Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow

without water?

12 Whilst it is yet in his greatness, and not cut down, it

12 Whilst it is yet in his greatness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand:

he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He is green before the sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden. 17 His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the

place of stones.

18 If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

19 Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth

shall others grow.

20 Behold. God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

THE GLORIES OF NATURE OUGHT TO MOVE OUR HEARTS TO PRAISE THEIR ETERNAL NATURE.

We read in many parts of the sacred volume, that if we seek our own salvation, we shall not seek in vain. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you," is the comforting exhortation of the apostle James. His bliss must be great to whom God is near; and we will, therefore, without delay, exert ourselves to approach to him. Our joys and our sufferings; our conscience, and that most valuable treasure, the Bible, shall be appealed to, that we may accomplish the important object. All these, with nature in renewed beauty, and the various marks of divine Providence which we meet with in the several stages of existence, will, we trust, serve to bring us nearer to the Deity we adore. The proofs which are afforded us of his paternal care; the wisdom which so wonderfully ordains all things; the faculties with which we are endowed, and the countless objects of magnificence and loveliness on which we are permitted to feast our eyes; as they satisfy us of the existence of an Almighty superintending master of the universe, also, indisputably establish the important fact, that man is the object of his peculiar care, and constrain us to rejoice that it was his good pleasure that we should live.

This feeling we desire to cherish in our hearts; but not only will we bear it in our minds, by deeds we will also endeavour to draw near to God. We will take delight in musing on the various blessings of which we have been the recipients, and all the varieties of his vast creation, shall serve but to quicken in our hearts that admiration and love power so boundless, and bounty so immense, are well fitted to inspire. Like him, we will desire to be kind and indulgent to those beneath us; the indolent heart shall not be allowed to sleep in degrading inactivity, but shall be roused to noble exertions, in distributing the gifts which nature prepares, and which, placed within our reach may by our means, contribute to the comfort of our neighbours. For such purposes the powers we possess were bestowed by our Creator; and shall we sinfully waste the days in which they might be usefully exercised in the cause of benevolence?

So to exert ourselves, is unquestionably our duty. Placed in this world for a season, to sow those seeds which eventually may ripen into imperishable fruit, to be enjoyed in a life which can know no end, shall we forget our high destination by abandoning ourselves to inglorious ease? This must not be. On each succeeding night, be these the questions which each of us shall put to his heart—"By how much have I this day been drawn nearer to God What sacred duty have I been mindful to fulfill in that situation which has been assigned to me by Providence?" "Have I properly exercised those faculties with which, by the goodness of the Lord of all, I have been endowed?" Thus interrogating ourselves, let us guard against the habit degenerating into a mere form. We must carefully review our conduct, to ascertain whether by our actions we have, in the progress of the day, advanced nearer to our final consum-What zeal, let us ask, have we manifested to forward good works? What monuments of the faithful discharge of our duty can we perceive that will remain behind us, when we depart from this transitory state of being? What evidence that we have been animated by a sincerely affectionate zeal for the welfare of others? These inquiries we ought solemnly to repeat every future night, that God may permit us to see.

Bountiful nature continues, with a lavish hand. unweariedly to pour her blessings on the world. Her example should stimulate us to mark our gratitude to the giver of all good, by a course of active kindness. It calls upon us most urgently, in a loud voice, that we may not appear to be surpassed by the inanimate and irrational creation: that we alone, in the great household of God, may not be found idle and unprofitable servants, who cannot be deemed worthy of his grace, whom his justice must call upon him to punish.

Oh, yes, Eternal Sovereign of the universe! in our intercourse with the glorious objects of nature; in the contemplation of its exhaustless riches, and never-ceasing labours for the benefit of man, we will seek fresh nourishment for holv eagerness to work thy will, and to adore thee with a pure heart, in the magnificent temple which

6 E

thou hast constructed for us. We will worship thee with zeal and sincerity. Then shall we feel that we have drawn night to thee, and thy informing spirit will guide us to all that is true, and righteous, and sublime.

EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE WORLD.

But the blessings conferred by Christianity on the world are not confined to ameliorating the moral, civil, religious, and political condition of mankind: the most polished nations, now in existence, are indebted to it for the preservation and diffusion of literature, and the elegant arts of painting, statuary, architecture, and music. Christianity has been instrumental in preserving and disseminating moral, classical, and theological knowledge, in every nation where it has been established. The law, the gospel, the comments on them, and the works of the fathers, were written in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin; so that a knowledge of these three languages became indispensably necessary to every man who wished to be an intelligent Christian. Christianity being contained in books, the use of letters became necessary to its teachers; nor could learning have been entirely lost, while there was an order of men, who were obliged to possess a moderate share of it, to qualify them for the priesthood, and entitle them to its emoluments. In the time of Tacitus (A. D. 108), the German nations were strangers to letters; and the two following facts prove, that other nations were likely to continue illiterate, had not the teachers of the gospel exerted themselves for their instruction. The Goths, having been themselves masters of Athens (A. D. 270), brought together into one heap all the books they had found there, and would have consumed the valuable treasure, had not one of them told his companions, that while the Greeks amused themselves with those they neglected the art of war, and were easily overcome. Theodoric, a Gothic prince (A. D. 293), would not suffer the children of his subjects to be instructed in the sciences; imagining, that such instruction enervated the mind, rendered men unfit for martial exploits; and that the boy who trembled at the rod, would never look undaunted at the sword or spear. But no sooner was Christianity propagated among barbarians, than they were instructed in the use of letters. Ulphilas, a Gothic bishop (A. D. 380), invented letters for his illiterate countrymen, translated most of the Bible into the vulgar tongue for their use, and instructed them in its doctrines; and some Goths soon became so well informed, that they compared their version with the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew originals. Before the introduction of Christianity in Ireland, the natives had no alphabet, no annals but their verses, nor anything but memory to preserve their verses, their antiquities, the genealogies of their kings, and the exploits of their heroes. The more verses a man could repeat, the more learned he was deemed, while the bard who composed anything new, was sure of being respected by the kings and people. This was the state of the Irish, when the Christian missionaries came to instruct them in the use of letters, and in the truths of the gospel. Such a change, however, was wrought in them by Christianity and its teachers, that Ireland was styled the island of very pious and very learned men. Ansgarius, the chief apostle of the northern nations, not only preached the gospel to those barbarians, but established schools for the instruction of youth in religion and letters. Cyril and Methodius, who converted the Bulgarians, Moravians, and Bohemians, about the same time, previously invented the Slavic alphabet, and translated the Bible, and some Greek and Latin authors, into the Slavic tongue, for the purpose of expanding their narrow minds, and softening their

hard hearts to mildness and pity. Nearly the same may be said of other barbarians who became proselvtes of the gospel. In Russia the teachers of Christianity recommended, at the same time, the gospel and letters, the rudiments of the arts, of law, and order; and were seconded in their exertions by religious princes, who employed skilful Greeks for decorating the cities, and for the instruction of the people. 'The dome and paintings of [ the famous cathedral of ] St. Sophia at Constantinople, were rudely copied in the Russian Churches of Kiow and Novogorod; the writings of the fathers were translated into the Sclavonic language; and three hundred noble youths were invited, or compelled, to attend lectures in the college of Jaroslaus.' In various parts of Europe, edifices for divine worship arose under the fostering care of the clergy, aided by the munificence of sovereigns and of the laity; and though these were sometimes influenced by unworthy motives, yet the effect has has not been the less beneficial to the arts of painting, design, architecture, and music, whose professors were encouraged to the exertion of their talents by liberal remuneration.

Horne,

# MORNING.-MAY 16.

GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS.

I cried unto the Lord most just,
Most merciful, in prayer;
I cried unto Him from the dust,
I told Him my despair.

When sunk my soul within me,—then Thou knew'st the path I chose; Unharm'd I pass'd the spoiler's den, I walk'd through ambush'd foes.

I look'd for friends,—there was not one
In sorrow to condole;

I look'd for refuge,—there was none, None cared for my soul.

I cried unto the Lord;—I said,—
Thou art my refuge; Thou,
My portion;—hasten to mine aid;
Hear and deliver now.

Now, from the dungeon, from the grave,— Exalt thy suppliant's head; Thy voice is freedom to the slave, Revival to the dead,

Montgomery

#### PEOPLE MAY SAFELY RELY ON HIS AID. DEUT. VIII.

- 1 All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers.
- 2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out cf the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

4 Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy

foot swell, these forty years.

5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

7 For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey;

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given

11 Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day,

### TO TRUST IN GOD IS A COMFORT AS WELL AS A DUTY.

To confide in the goodness of him who gave us all we possess, and who made us, is, to a rational mind, less a duty than a necessity. "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him," is that which we are enjoined to do in the Bible. The precept it is especially incumbent on a Christian to remember. He knows the love of the Lord through his only begotten son, and surely to no commandment more willing obedience ought to be rendered than to that intimated to us by the text just quoted, seeing its tendency and effect is to relieve the heart from every burthen that may oppress it. Knowing the love of the Lord as communicated through the Saviour Jesus, the Christian must gladly attend to the call, and esteem it a privilege. The uncertainty which surrounds all human affairs, the weakness both of body and soul, which we feel in ourselves, and the dangers by which our life and peace are daily threatened, cause us, from day to day, to experience harrassing vexation, and thrilling fears; and prevent us from enjoying lasting cheerfulness and peace. But can we not rescue ourselves from this mental thraldom? Difficulties there are. certainly, in the way. Love itself, which "is the fulfilling of the law," is an ever-flowing source of solicitude, since we daily know the lives and happiness of those who are most dear to us are exposed to danger, and with this before us it is not easy for our hearts to remain at ease, and unconcerned. Then the wise dispensations of God are frequently so incomprehensible, that the human observer strives but in vain to understand them. We witness the deplorable condition of good men, and wonder that divine assistance should be so long delayed, and seeing these things, will sometimes stagger the faith of a feeble believer, and fill his bosom with unworthy doubts and wild What then, let us ask ourselves as Christians, are we to do? Why, this we are to do, as men and as Christians, we are to cast all our cares upon God, commit ourselves to his good keeping, and say with the disciple of Jesus, "in the darkest days, I am fearful indeed, but I do not despair."

The inquiring soul would ask, if that be possi-Alas! poor soul, hadst thou studied with proper attention the important exhortation of scripture, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," thou wouldst not ask such a question. Thou wouldst then fearlessly throw all thy cares upon the Lord, and from how much pain, and sorrow, and anxiety, would that

relieve thee.

This, at length, we clearly understand, and to thee we turn, Oh, merciful Father, with perfect confidence, and undoubting resolution. Blind, indeed, must we have been, ever to yield to despondency. Could we, in the excess of our weakness, forgetful of all past indications of thy bounty. have imagined that thou wouldst forsake the children of thy care, and leave them to pine in hope-

less gloom, for ever?

It is not for us to penetrate and judge of thy councils, or to murmur at thy dispensations, because to us thy ultimate object has not been made known. But shall confidence fail, because thy aid, and instant answers to our prayers, are not always conceded? We know that this life is not to endure for ever; that it is designed, by purifying to prepare us for scenes of higher importance, and of greater enjoyment. We are enjoined to believe that such is the object of our Maker; that one day we may see the promises of of God realized, and gain a place in heaven. Courage then; let us take courage; preserve our faith; commit ourselves to the Holy One, and cast all our cares upon God. Then shall we never sigh in vain for comfort; never mourn as men without hope. Blessed is he who relies on the Lord; for to do so is agreeable to the Almighty. and must largely promote the welfare of man.

#### THE FEAR OF GOD EXPLAINED.

Fear in general is that passion of our nature, whereby we are excited to provide for our security upon the approach of evil. But when this description is applied to the fear of God, we are not to apprehend that God can be the Author of any effect that is evil in itself, though it may by accident be evil to us: his severest inflictions are in themselves acts of justice and righteousness, and flow from the excellencies and perfections of his nature; though with respect to us, they have the evil of punishment, and demand this regard of our fear to him. The frequent mistakes of men in forming their apprehensions of this object of their fear, and consequently of the nature of that respect which is due to him, has given rise to that necessary distinction of the fear of God into a servile or superstitious, and a filial or religious fear. The former we are to avoid as a dishonour to God: the latter we are obliged to as an indispensable duty, the true spring and motive of our Christian obedience. When men represent the divine nature to their minds as the author of evil, as a being averse from their happiness, and armed with power only for their destruction; as an austere and rigorous master, easily provoked, and always lifting up his hand to take vengeance; such conceptions must unavoidably raise in our minds the passion of Terror, a dread of the divine nature mixed with abhorrence and aversion, as from an enemy whom we hate, but dare not resist. But this is so far from that fear which is a duty required by God, that even the devils are constrained to do this homage to his Majesty, who believe and tremble. This is no other than that forced respect a captive pays to his conqueror, a slave to his Lord. And the worship we are induced to offer from these mistaken apprehensions of the divine nature, are a blasphemous affront to his perfections; since we worship him not as God, but as a cruel and tyrannical being, the idol of our fears and the creature of our superstition; and we might, for the same reasons, adore the malice and power even of hell itself.

The fear then which is acceptable to God, is a filial or religious fear; an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding from a just esteem and regard to his perfections, which produces in us an inclination to his service, and an unwillingness to offend. This is a duty we owe in some proportion to all who stand in superior relation to us, and is in the fifth commandment required towards our prince and our parent, under the name of honour; a respect, which in the notion of it implies a mixture of love and fear; and in the object equally supposes goodness and power. As a son, though he reverences the authority of his Father, and is deterred by a just apprehension of his displeasure from daring to offend him, yet forgets not at the same time that he is concerned with the tenderest affection for his happiness, the protector of his weakness, and the reliever of his wants; one who will look on his failings with mercy, and even correct his offences with compassion: so, though religion demands our reverence of God, as that sovereign power from whom we derive our being, the Judge of all our actions, and the author and disposer of our happiness; though it represents him clothed with majesty and honour, as the supreme ruler of the world, to whose authority all things in heaven and earth do bow and obey; yet it teaches us at the same time to adore him as a mild and merciful being, of infinite love and affection to his creatures; as a friend and a father, whose care supplies our wants, and defends our impotence; to whose favour we owe all the happiness we can receive here, and from whose compassion in Christ we hope for eternal glory hereafter. Dr. Rogers.

## EVENING -- MAY 16.

#### BROTHERLY LOVE THE CHRISTIAN DUTY

Onward, onward, may we press
Through the path of duty;
Virtue is true happiness,
Excellence true beauty;
Minds are of celestial birth,
Make we then a heaven of earth,

Closer, closer, let us knit
Hearts and hands together,
Where our fireside comforts sit
In the wildest weather;
Oh, they wander wide, who roam
For the joys of life from home.

Nearer, nearer, bands of lov Draw our souls in union, To our Father's house above To the saints' communion Thither every hope ascend, There may all our labours end,

Montgomery.

#### RICHES DO NOT TEND TO HEAVEN. MATTHEW XIX.

16 And, behold, one came, and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness.

19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven?

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

27 ¶ Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

FAITH PROVED BY WISELY EXERCISED CHARITY.

"Riches are good indeed, if used without sin:" but in themselves are valueless. They should only be prized as the means of doing good to others. Worse than useless would they be, found employed to gain friends in the worshippers of vile Mammon. Riches are really a good, only when they are found in the hands of the truly wise. This, however, is not the opinion of the world, for the thoughtless crowd imagine happiness to consist in the mere possession of articles of great price. Poor, weak, foolish world! how egregiously art thou mistaken! Happiness can only be found associated with content, and Mammon is so far from gratifying his followers with that invaluable gift, that, on the contrary, his votaries are incessantly disturbed with wild anxiety, and still craving more, they are strangers to repose. It is not gold, it is not silver, that can render our souls better and nobler; that can only be effected by goods not of the earth, but by spiritual goods. The former, eagerly as we may covet them, if gained, come frequently accompanied by distraction, vexation, and disgust. This, the voices of those who have lived through thousands of years can testify, has always been the case. Were the experiment now made on an individual, the result would be the same. Give to a poor, but contented labourer, immense riches, without wisdom, he would in the first instance be greatly delighted; but call upon him again, after the lapse of a year, and you will find that the colour of health has disappeared from his face; the easy cheerfulness of the eve has given place to the sulky scowl of distrust, and the heart that could once find happiness in the rural dance under the green tree, is now disturbed by covetousness, pride, and perhaps fierce animosity.

But this is not all. Not only is our earthly path strewed over with thorns by the possession of riches; it is, unhappily, an acknowledged truth, that they often impede our progress in the road which leads to heaven. They that are resolute to be rich, are likely to fall into snares, and many perish by their wealth. Having gained the great object of their ambition, men are commonly led astray, either by their avarice or their prodigality. They cease to pray and to labour, to be temperate and sober, and thus are misled and betrayed into Pharisaical conceits by ignorant applause or artful flattery, and they shut against themselves the road that leads to immortal hap-

piness, as declared in the word of God, in the memorable saying, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

It has been well said, that it is the pleasure of God, that men should be rewarded with other benefits than those which captivate the eye in this world, and that the bad have more to dread than the afflictions which fall upon them here. He mocks those who trust to an arm of flesh, and think to command their destiny by the force of human reason. When, in their arrogance, they exult that they have prevailed on one point, to which they attached vast importance, they find that more than one circumstance follows in the train of their success, which renders it worse than useless. The glitter of wealth may charm the beholder at a distance, but, realized of itself, it confers little real comfort on the greedy possessor. and, at the close of a toilsome career, he severely feels that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Humility, fraternal love, patience, and the gentler virtues, are found to thrive better in the barren soil of poverty, than in the sunburnt land of riches; and what, let us once more ask ourselves, in the words of our Saviour, "is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Oh! never let us weakly envy the great their unwieldy possessions! It is not for us to indulge vain longings for affluence, and the brightest treasures of the earth. These, we know, in themselves, are mean and worthless: but if a gracious Deity should be pleased to bestow upon us store of gold, may his mercy add to the gift that prudence which will keep the heart uncorrupted! The advantages which he may deign to send, we should receive with sincere thanksgiving, but earnestly implore him that to them may be added the riches of his grace. We pray to receive with them the consolations of a tranquil mind, health, calm slumbers, and an approving conscience. May we never be misled by prosperity, but, finding it ours, apply ourselves to make a worthy use of the means entrusted to us for doing good. Pride, intemperance. prodigality, we will strive most sedulously to keep far away, and avarice and suspicion shall have no place in our bosoms. Be it our joy to comfort our brethren while we live, and ever, so far as may be in our power, to provide for their wellbeing, when we, in the course of nature, "go hence, and are no more seen." Mighty Donor of all! in

the fulness of thy bounty, assist us really to profit from all thy gifts, through the interposing advocacy of our Saviour Jesus!

THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS HIS OWN GOOD, LABOURING FOR ANOTHER'S SALVATION.

Many, who have at first turned a deaf ear to the invitations and entreaties of pious friendship, have at length listened to them and begun to seek the Lord. The bread has been cast upon the waters, and after many days it has been found again. We are told that Hobab refused at first to accompany Moses to Cansan. He said unto him, "I will not go, but I will depart into mine own land, and to my kindred;" Moses was not discouraged by this refusal. He still entreated, and reasoned, and promised; and there is some ground to suppose, from a passage in the fourth chapter of the book of Judges, that he finally prevailed. Let his success encourage us to be as zealous and persevering as he was, and to be as unwilling to take a denial. Our feeble efforts may be blessed at a time, when we least expect a blessing; yea, though we may go down to the grave without seeing the fruit of our labours, our labours may not be in vain. Our words may be remembered, when we are almost forgotten, and the soul of our friend may be saved; our child or parent, our husband or wife may be snatched as a brand from the burning, and may be through eternity our companion in glory, our joy, and our crown.

The invitation of Moses implies also, that the Christian is tenderly concerned for the spiritual welfare and happiness of his fellow travellers, as well as for the repentance and salvation of the ungodly sinner. Moses not only said to Hobab, "Come thou with us," but he adds to this invitation a promise, "We will do thee good;" we will not make light of you nor neglect you; we will not regard you as a stranger after you have joined the camp of Israel; but we will treat you as a brother and a friend. "And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall

do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."

The spirit which dictated these words, is the same spirit that reigns in every Christian's heart. He desires to do good, not in an ungodly world only, but also in his Saviour's church. Hence he watches over his fellow pilgrims in their journey, not that he may gratify a proud and censorious spirit by the discovery of their failings, but that he may comfort the feeble minded among them and support the weak. Like his compassionate Master, he enters into the difficulties, fears, and sorrows, of those who are travelling with him to Zion; he hears their burdens and so filled the large of the large of the second seco

he bears their burdens, and so fulfils the law of Christ.

We may infer, lastly, from this invitation, that if we would ever reach the kingdom of God, we must join ourselves now to the people of God. "Come thou with us," was the advice given to Hobab. It was only in company with the Israelites, that he could share their privileges, and enter into the land which had been marked out for their inheritance; and it is only in the society of those who fear the Lord, that we can taste of the consolations of our God, and draw near to his kingdom. There is no going to heaven in company with those who are going to hell.

Here, then, is a lesson for the young. In forming your connections, and choosing your associates, take those only for your friends, who will consent to walk with you in the way to heaven, and who give you reasonable ground to hope that they are already seeking that better country, and will help

you forward in your journey to it.

Bradley.

# MORNING.-MAY 17.

JEHOVAH'S PRAISE.

Sing forth Jehovah's praise,
Ye saints that on him call:
Magnify him always,
His holy churches all:
In him rejoice;
And there proclaim
His holy name,
With sounding voice.

My soul bear thou thy part:
Triumph in God above;
With a well-tuned heart,
Sing thou the songs of love,
Thou art his own,
Whose precious blood
Shed for thy good,
His love made known.

He did in love begin,
Renewing thee by grace,
Forgiving all thy sin,
Shew'd thee his pleasing face.
He did thee heal,
By his Son's merit,
And by his Spirit,
For glory seal.

Baxter.

GOD THE FIRST AND THE LAST, WILL DEFEND HIS PEOPLE FROM EVIL. ISAIAH XLIV.

2 Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed,

and my blessing upon thine offspring:

4 And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.

5 One shall say, I um the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.

6 Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and

beside me there is no God.

7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a god beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any

THE HIGH POSITION OF MAN, AN EVIDENCE OF THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

Ever and anon, the contemplative mind, while in the face of nature we behold the majesty of God, naturally turns to our own insignificance, and the exclamation, "Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him." occurs to us. little, Oh Lord, are we, compared with thee! how unworthy of thy care, if visited with thy justice; yet, Oh! what mighty things hast thou done for us in giving us the human form, and still more, by endowing us with perception to understand in some degree thy goodness, and bestowing a soul capable of knowing immortal happiness; and even of comprehending while here, the sublimity of its own nature, and its high destiny. We rejoice that we are able to pray to thee, to thank thee, and to put our trust in thee. We are men, reasonable beings, created in thine own image, provided with faculties equal to the exercise of virtue. By the force of our reason, we are able to lift ourselves to the contemplation of objects which no eye can see, which no ear can hear, but which the active mind, assisted by thy Holy Spirit, can joyfully explore. We can admire the wise laws of thy nature, and adore thee in thy works; we can worship thee who art a spirit, a perfect and blissful spirit, "in spirit and in truth."

How delightful! how heart-stirring is such an occupation! but no effort of imagination could elevate us more than musing on thy gracious and wonderful dispensations, and on the justice by

which thou governest the wide world.

Thy power is everywhere manifested. Thou installest, and thou dethronest kings. Thou art the source of all good. To the wise thou givest their wisdom, and to the intelligent their understanding. All the kingdoms of the earth, all the people that live, are in thy hand. Thy councils, thy designs, are frequently for a long time hidden from us; that we may feel thy greatness and our own humility; that we may learn to put our trust in thee; to disengage our souls from earth, and live in heaven; but still, eventually, we are constrained to admit thy powerful, thy resistless hand, guides all things to a glorious consummation. So much our mortal eyes can discern, and deeply our souls are affected by the spectacle.

Whatever the ultimate purpose of the Deity, it is his will to carry a portion of his wise councils into effect, by the agency of men, weak or sinful as they may be, and however undeserving, as it would seem to us, of a distinction so honourable. Would that the powers, that the understanding which thou hast bestowed to that end, were wisely and exclusively devoted to thy service,

Oh God !

To the service of the Eternal, and not to that of man, we ought to consecrate ourselves. ever we aim at, it should be our care to see that our doings are in accordance with thy commandments, to enquire whether they are calculated to gain for us thy favour; whether they tend to thy glory, and are likely to win for us thy blessing Such works we ought cheerfully to undertake, and steadily to pursue. On the other hand we should feel it incumbent upon us to reject every scheme presented to our adoption, which ambition, avarice, or ostentation may suggest. Feeling how weak, how mean we are in ourselves, it ought to be the wish of thinking men to ennoble their nature, by striving only after those objects which may render us, in some degree, worthy of being the children of so glorious a parent, and of being the redeemed of Christ.

Blissful is the conviction of the pious man, who feels that he is in thy service, that he is one of the chosen agents of thy wisdom, one of the assistants appointed to work in thy laboratory, and carry out thy designs. To know that he is worthy of thy favouring notice, is happiness. Grant that we may so far comprehend thy ways, as to make ourselves thy useful servants, to further the objects of thy wise government, and loving providence. So may we render ourselves not wholly unworthy of thy bounty. Let it be our noble ambition, our devout endeavour, to merit the high position which has been assigned to us, and that inexpressible and everlasting happiness, which we have been permitted to hope, will

finally be ours.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S THOUGHTS SHOULD NOT WAVER— THE SINNER MUST NOT DESPAIR.

The godly themselves are very much wanting in the holiness of their thoughts, and the liveliness of their affections. Sense leadeth away the thoughts too easily after these present sensible things; while faith being infirm, the thoughts of God and heaven are much disadvantaged by their invisibility. Many a gracious soul crieth out, O that I could think as easily, and as affectionately, and as unweariedly about the Lord, and the life to come, as I can do about my friends, my health, my habitation, my business, and other concerns of this life! But, alas! such thoughts of God and heaven have far more enemies and resistance than the thoughts of earthly matters have.

It is not distracting, vexatious thoughts of God, that the holy scriptures call us to; but it is to such thoughts as tend to the healing, and peace, and felicity of the soul; and therefore it is not a melancholy, but a joyful life. If God be better than the world, it must needs be better to think of him. If he be more beloved than any friend, the thoughts of him should be sweeter to us. If he be the everlasting hope and happiness of the soul, it should be a foretaste of happiness to

find him nearest to our hearts. The nature and use of holy thoughts, and of all religion, is but to exalt, and sanctify, and delight the soul, and bring it up to everlasting rest. And is this the way to melancholy or madness? Or is it not more likely to make men melancholy, to think of nothing but a vain, deceitful, and vexatious world, that hath much to disquiet us, but nothing to satisfy us, and can give the soul no

hopes of any durable delight?

Yet as God is not equally related to all, so is he not the same to all men's thoughts. If a wicked enemy of God and godliness be forced and frightened into some thoughts of God, you cannot expect that they should be as sweet and comfortable thoughts as those of his most obedient children are. While a man is under the guilt and power of his reigning sin, and under the wrath and curse of God, unpardoned, unjustified, a child of the devil, it is not this man's duty to think of God, as if he were fully reconciled to him, and took pleasure in him as in his own. Nor is it any wonder if such a man think of God with fear, and think of his sin with grief and shame. Nor is it any wonder the justified themselves do think of God with fear and grief, when they have provoked him by some sinful and unkind behaviour, or are cast into doubts of their sincerity and interest in Christ, and when he hides his face or assaulteth them with his terrors. To doubt whether a man shall live for ever in heaven or hell, may rationally trouble the thoughts of the wisest man in the world; and it were but sottishness not to be troubled at it: David himself could say, "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. Will the Lord cast off for ever?"

Yet all the sorrowful thoughts of God, which are the duty either of the godly or the wicked, are but necessary preparatives of their joy. It is not to melancholy, distraction, or despair, that God calleth any, even the worst; but it is that the wicked would "Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near; that he would forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon." Despair is sin; and the thoughts that tend to it are sinful thoughts even in the wicked. If worldly crosses, or the sense of danger to the soul had cast any into melancholy, or overwhelmed them with fears, you can name nothing in the world that in reason should be so powerful a remedy to recover them, as the thoughts of God,

his goodness, and mercy.

Baxter.

# EVENING.-MAY 17.

HARMONY, LOVE, AND CHARITY.

How beautiful the sight
Of brethren who agree
In friendship to unite,
And bonds of charity;
'Tis like the precious ointment, shed
O'er all his robes, from Aaron's head.

'Tis like the dews that fill
The cups of Hermon's flowers,
Or Zion's fruitful hill,
Bright with the drops of showers,
When mingling odours breathe around,
And glory rests on all the ground.

For there the Lord commands Blessing, a boundless store, From his unsparing hands, Yea, life for evermore: Thrice happy they who meet above, To spend eternity in love!

Montgomery.

TO DO TO OTHERS AS WE WOULD THEY SHOULD DO
TO US, IS THE LAW. MATT. VII.

2 With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy bro-

ther's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own

eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote

out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7 ¶ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall

find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law

and the prophets.

13 ¶ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

# CHARITY SHOULD NOT HAVE FOR ITS OBJECT THE APPLAUSE OF MEN.

To be good and charitable to our fellow-men, is our duty. "He that honoureth him, (our Lord) hath mercy on the poor," saith the scripture; but it is not said in terms, "He who has mercy on the poor, honours his Maker:" this cannot be affirmed without some qualification. The world is not to decide whether we, by our pity for misfortune, honour God, nor is he on



"NO BOOK EVER GAVE SUCH A MORTAL WOUND TO POPERY AS THIS."

Neale's History of the Puritume.

# FOXE'S

# BOOK OF MARTYRS;

EDITED BY THE REV. JOHN KENNEDY.

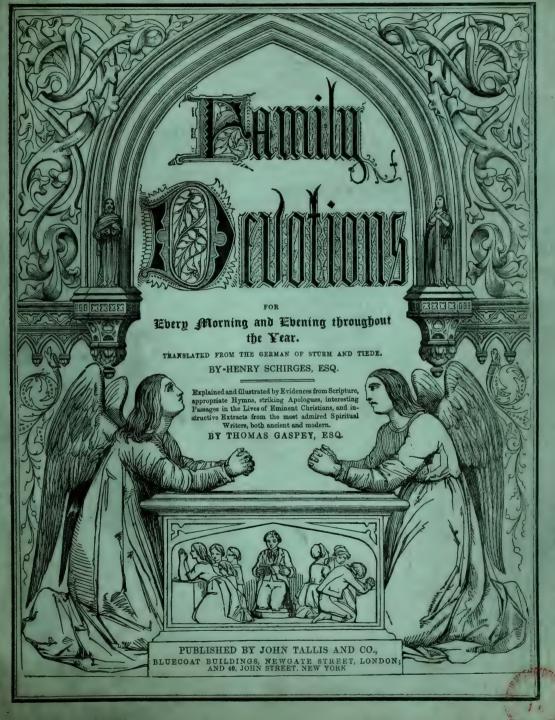


"WHAT THE CHURCH OF ROME HAS DONE

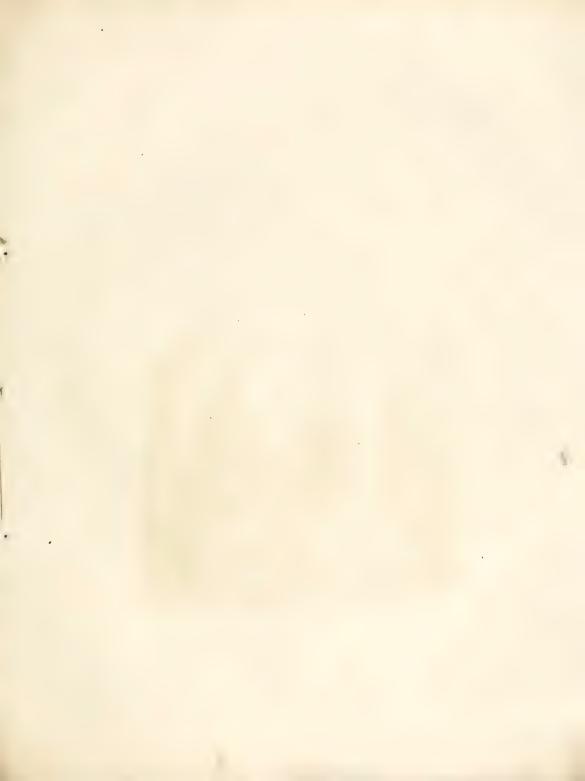
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whom our charity is bestowed, which he acknowledges by his "God bless you," to decide whether we, in relieving him, have fulfilled our duty to the Almighty. It depends upon the feeling by which we are actuated, and whether the mercy we extend to a suffering fellow-creature be done with a view to fulfil our duty to the Lord. Unfortunately we are conscious that, in such cases, but little merit is ours; that our education, tempers, habits, ambition, inclinations, and humours, have no small part in those acts which are deemed by us works of charity. If we deduct from what we have done, what has been prompted by such accidents, little will remain for which we can take credit to ourselves. Let us not be self-deceived, but, communing with our hearts, fairly ask, whether we really thought of our duty and our God, while we were engaged in wiping a tear from the eye of misery, and were we, in that moment, grateful to the Supreme Being, for giving us a heart that could feel for others, with the means of alleviating their distress. Relieving the indigent, did we regard it as a privilege to be the instrument of God's kindness to the sufferer, while we exulted in the thought that so doing we had gained the applause of our Saviour, who has declared the poor should be regarded as his brethren? When we approached a fellow-creature, was this our feeling-"the poor man now before us is perhaps less sinful than we have been"? Did we ask ourselves whether, "should such be the will of the Omnipotent, that our situations were reversed, our condition rendered as deplorable as his, we would submit with cheerful resignation to the stern decree?" Did nothing of all this occur to us, when we were so engaged? Then what was the mighty effort of virtue we made, at last, though it might gain the applause of the world, and call forth expressions and tears of gratitude, from the sufferer to whom we afforded relief?

Shall the wicked, the idle, and the worldly-minded, still govern our every action? Shall dread of their reproach inspire greater fear than we commonly feel when we sin against the commandments of our Lord? Did the world not notice our doings—did we not look for a reward so dear to our hearts as the praise of men, when we do a good deed, would not our charity be likely to fail? Would our hearts still be accessible to pity? Too much cause have we to fear that in the case supposed, suffering would often go unrelieved. It is only when we desire to aid

the poor and the afflicted, from the love of God, and the fear of offending him, and from a desire to honour his name, that we may deserve honour at his hands. It is only in such cases that our offerings are worthy of our Maker, and beneficial to ourselves. Such adoration as rises spontaneously from a pure heart, is alone that which the Deity will regard with favour.

The offering which a mind devoted to virtue presents at the altar of our God, appears in its true shape to the All-seeing Eye. And as the microscope enables us to discover numerous defects in the most ingenious works of art, while it only brings to view new beauties in those of nature, so, to the Judge of all the earth, that devotion which is elaborately prepared to elicit the admiration of man, will appear mean and worthless by the side of those supplications which emanate from an unsophisticated heart, looking not to the world, or its vain praise, but only sigh-

ing to gain, by its fervour and sincerity, the merciful consideration of God.

Lord of the universe! it has been thy pleasure to place us, as it were, upon a stage, where, by artifice, it may not be difficult to gain the suffrages of thoughtless spectators, even while we sin. Works of charity may be acted on it in such a way as to give us celebrity among mortals, and vet be offences, from the spirit in which they are performed, against thy dignity. It is thine, and only thine, to judge of the motives by which we are animated. We desire to suspect ourselves, and pray that, deceived by self-love, we may not be led to arrogate to ourselves merit to which we have no just claim. Against such pernicious flattery put us constantly on our guard. In all our goings out, and in all our comings in, we would ever look up to thee, mindful of thy omniscience, and appealing to thy love. Should ours be the sweet consciousness that we are in harmony with thee and thy commandments, we may calmly listen to the panegyrics of the gazing multitude who join to approve our conduct, but with whose clamorous support we are content to dispense. That, however, can only follow us to the door of our bed-chambers. Thence, perhaps the sycophants will withdraw, mocking the weakness which could listen contentedly to the voice of base adulation. Farther still must the acclamations which filled our ears be left behind, when we reach the grave. They may possibly be succeeded by virulent calumny, and measureless derision.

Aware that such is the uncertain and deceitful character of human applause, grant us, O God! wisdom and firmness, that we may experience no inordinate craving for it. Not the eulogies of men, but thy smile, we seek, as well in our efforts at charity, as in the outpourings of our minds, which we now address to thee. Improve our faculties, that we may more worthily prove we fear thy frown, and sigh but to gain thy all-gracious favour and support.

#### CHRISTIANITY PROVED AND INDICATED BY CHARITY.

Are we not encompassed by multitudes, who have hatred and evil will at our Sion—who watch every careless word, every unguarded action of our lives—who are ready to aggravate all our faults, to expose our infirmities, and traduce even our virtues themselves? And if the number and malice of their enemies, was an argument to the first Christians for such a prudent and regular behaviour as would silence their calumnies, and procure esteem and reverence to the gospel, the same reasons should enforce this duty on us under the same obligations as the apostle enjoined it on them.

Christianity, indeed, will always demand this tribute from its disciples. 'Tis implied in every one of its commandments, that we should not only obey them ourselves, but use our best endeavours to recommend the same performances to others also. And since an exemplary deportment in the duties of our station, is the most probable method to produce this effect; to reclaim the dissolute, convert the infidel, and win the greatest enemies of our faith to a respect and veneration for it; this is an obligation which will never cease, but remain a necessary duty in all ages and circumstances of the church. Proceed we, then, to consider what particular conduct will acquit us of this obligation. In general there is something lovely and endearing in every single instance of duty, prescribed by the gospel: a beauty which the most dissolute are forced to acknowledge, and the libertine himself to applaud and admire. How irresistible then are the charms of virtue, when the obedience is universal! When the graces of religion shine with an united lustre, and no crime can be objected to darken the character, and sully the perfection of the example! But I shall content myself at present to recommend the practice of some particular duties, of a more especial tendency to procure respect to ourselves, and honour to our religion; and those are, an extensive love and charity, the bond of peace, and foundation of all the comforts of a social life. 'Tis this is the most Christian grace of our religion, which softens our passions, appeases our resentments, and extends our beneficence to the miseries of our brethren; which inclines us to support the needy, compassionate the fatherless, and relieve the tears of the widow; which renders us the blessings and ornaments of the age in which we live, and the veneration of those which come after. And so lovely and obliging a disposition of soul cannot fail of endearing both us and our religion to the gratitude and affections of men. Let the fierce and implacable spirit of revenge be the character of our enemies; let them slander and traduce the innocent; let them rage and persecute the poor and the helpless; but let it be our glory to be pure and peaceable, ready to forgive, and easy to be intreated; compassionate to the sorrows, and bountiful to the wants of our greatest enemies. By this shall we vindicate the honour of our religion; by this shall all men know that we are the disciples of Christ.

Rogers.

# MORNING.—MAY 18.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S RACE.

Awake our souls, away our fears,
Let every trembling thought be gone,
Awake, and run the heav nly race,
And put a cheerful courage on.

True, 'tis a strait and thorny road,
And mortal spirits tire and faint;
But they forget the mighty God,
That feeds the strength of ev'ry saint.

The mighty God, whose matchless pow'r Is ever new and ever young, And firm endures while endless years Their everlasting circles run.

From thee, the overflowing spring, Our souls shall drink a fresh supply. While such as trust their native strength Shall melt away, and droop and die.

Swift as an eagle cuts the air,
We'll mount aloft to thine abode;
On wings of love our souls shall fly,
Nor tire amidst the heav'nly road.

Watts.

#### GOD ASSISTS THOSE WHO SERVE HIM. EXODUS IV.

1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

2 And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand?

And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on

the ground, and it became a serpent:
4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

5 That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,

hath appeared unto thee.

6 ¶ And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now
think hand into the bosom. And he put his hand into his

thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

7 And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And

he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

8 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

10 ¶ And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken

unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow

11 And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand

of him whom thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

#### THE STRIFE BETWEEN SOUL AND BODY.

By some philosophers it has been supposed that the soul and body of man are two beings opposed to each other, so wayward and foolish are the actions of man often found; so at variance with the course which reason would suggest. "For that which I do, I allow not, for what I would that I do not, but what I hate that do I," said the apostle, and in this humiliating confession, which is there among us who ought not to join? How can we understand ourselves!

"Oh what a mystery is man to man!" We cannot make out what is passing in our hearts. Nothing can be more incomprehensible; nothing more difficult to reconcile than the law in our minds, with the law in our limbs. Distinctly we perceive what duty requires us to do, and what is calculated to promote our happiness. Yet we feel towards it an indisposition within, which often we want strength to conquer. Fickle and variable as the wind, alternately we find ourselves wicked and good; in one moment strong and bravely resolved; in the next, weak, and miserably undecided; now, we are exalted by hope and exultation; and now, depressed by fear and discontent. For ever fluctuating between the will and the performance of duty, we are seldom long at peace with ourselves, and can never know that harmony and repose of a satisfied mind, which is the condition of happiness.

Not only do we falter, and thus lose that tranquillity which otherwise might be ours in this world, but often we give a preference to what we know is evil, and then we feel oppressed with a sense of guilt, and heaviness of heart, and that too while we eagerly desire to occupy ourselves in doing good, and even aspire to be regarded as belonging to him who has promised that his followers shall enjoy peace in their souls.

This is a painful situation. What under the circumstance are we to do? Shall we abandon ourselves to despair, and give up all hope of finding a remedy for the malady of the mind, which we deplore? Shall we dismiss all idea of submitting the refractory spirit in our limbs, to the law of our minds, and so gain peace? At all events, such despair would only be excusable, and rational, when our best powers had been strenuously exerted to correct the evil, but in Had we zealously applied to it all the means offered to us by the word of God, and by faith, and availed ourselves of appropriate exhortations, to subdue the sinful spirit without success, there might be some grounds for despondency. Such, however, is not yet the case; and therefore, far, far be it from us to give ourselves over as incapable of improvement.

Instead of acting such a part, let us rather take to ourselves the conviction that we can do all the good we desire to do, seeing God has commanded us to be perfect, as he is himself perfect. He has been graciously pleased to send to us his son, that we might learn to obey the moral law which is within us. He, having accomplished a glorious career on earth, deigns to assist us with the light of his holy word, and not only by his precepts but also by his example. These facts compel our conscience to furnish evidence that we are not incapable of amendment, but that all that we really want, is an ardent and sincere desire to reform our lives. That will lead us perseveringly to apply the efficient means which Divine mercy The powers we has placed within our reach. possess exerted, the aids granted us well employed, we should soon learn to follow the law of our mind.

Oh, that the children of light were always as wise in their way, as the children of darkness appear in theirs! Then would they wisely use the gifts which God has given to promote the welfare of their immortal souls; and labour to that end as assiduously as they now strive for the preservation of their perishing bodies.

Could men learn to be wise, they would be not less watchful and zealous in the cause of eternal happiness, than they are in that of temporal prosperity, and we should be less disposed to excuse ourselves, and to palliate folly and neglect of the law, than we have hitherto been. Our errors would be more severely condemned, and we should never cease to remember, and to prepare for the account we must one day render to him who gave us being. With what breathless anxiety ought we to look forward to the recompensing crown which we are to receive, or to the dreadful punishment which may be reserved for us! If we attended to these concerns, we should presently be enabled "to do that which we would, and not do that which we hate."

Let then our spirits be revived. Take courage, timid soul! Withdraw thyself from the distractions and vanities of life; use the instruments of grace which thy Lord has placed within thy reach. Do this, and have no fear, but his holy spirit will be with thee. The law in thy heart shall then cause its voice to be heard, with resistless force, the law in thy limbs shall not injure thy prospects of heaven, and conscious of the favour and mercy of thy God and, Saviour, days of peace shall be thine.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIALS AND ULTIMATE TRIUMPH.

After sin is pardoned, and the pardoned sinner is enabled to fight the good fight of faith against it, yet there is another enemy assaulting him to the last moment of his life. Fallen man is born to trouble. The man in Christ is so far from being exempt, that many are the troubles of the righteous. He is, in common with others, liable to pain and poverty, and to afflictions of every kind: he is, by his very profession, exposed to some of the most trying nature: his owning Christ -his following Christ-his conformity to Christ-give offence, provoke the malice of wicked men, and the rage of wicked spirits. Wave does not follow wave more certainly, than every day brings its fresh troubles, and forces the believer to seek for aids and comforts out of himself. This is a sore fight of afflictions. To bear up under them with any patience, and to reap profit from them, is a task above the power of mere man. Every little pain stirs up murmuring and impatience; and this rebellion against God's will is the parent of a thousand fretful tempers: and these, exercised by sharp suffering, render the man truly miserable. If his suffering continue long, increase much, it often drives the poor sinner to despair; and if he have no Saviour to flee unto, he is sometimes guilty of self-murder, and dies in an act of sin, rushing headlong into everlasting destruction—the wisdom of man, of Cato himself, furnishing no better remedy against the numerous evils of human life.

To man thus exposed to suffering, and helpless under it, his suffering remaining as long as sin remains, how necessary must be the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has vouch-safed to give us his promises of help, suited to every possible case of distress. When it is his will that any of his people should be tried, he engages to make the trial of their faith much more precious than that of gold which perisheth. He is with them, present with his divine supports and holy comforts. "Call upon me," says he, "in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me: many are the troubles of the righteous; but out of them all the Lord delivered them." They acknowledge with gratitude, "God was our refuge and strength; we have found him a very pre-

sent help in trouble;" helping us to bear up under the heaviest pressures, keeping his everlasting arms underneath us, as long as we suffer; and, if the sufferings increase, increasing our faith and patience, until they have done their perfect work.

When, through the aids of his spirit, these promises have their full credit through his inward peace, which he alone can give, and which the world cannot take away: when he makes the heart to feel happy in God, enjoying the peculiar supports of the gospel, and living up to its privileges; then the believer finds the apostle's experience to be true-"always sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," and sometimes with a fulness of joy, according to what is written: "But now, thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine: when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: fear not, for I am with thee," to support, to deliver. This is spoken to the redeemed, who are God's property, and whom he bought with a great price.

Romaine.

### EVENING.—MAY 18.

#### THE ALMIGHTY WATCHES OVER HIS WORSHIPPERS.

My Shepherd will supply my need, Jehovah is his name: In pastures fresh he makes me feed, Beside the living stream.

He brings my wand'ring spirit back, When I forsake his ways; And leads me for his mercy's sake, In paths of truth and grace.

The sure provisions of my God, Attend me all my days; O may thy house be mine abode, And all my works be praise.

Golden Treasury.

WISDOM FROM ABOVE, GIVES SECURITY WHEN WE ARE DOWN. JOB XI.

- 5 But Oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;
- 6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.
- 7 Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?
- 8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

  9 The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and
- broader than the sea.
- 10 If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?
- 11 For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also, will he not consider it?

- 12 For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.
- 13 If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

14 If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away:

17 And thine age shall be clearer than the noon day; thou

shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

# THE DANGERS OF NIGHT, AND OUR DEFENCE AGAINST THEM.

Many perils beset the path of man. livest in great danger," is the scripture declaration, and of this we are reminded when preparing for rest on each returning evening. If, with all our waking senses about us, we are but imperfectly provided, and have but imperfect controul over our actions, what must be our condition when the curtain of night has fallen upon the world, and we sleep. Then do we lose all distinct perception, and we have no power over our actions or even our thoughts. What can save us from peril at such times, when we are prostrated, and wholly paralyzed? Nothing but that unfailing kindness, which gives us friends to watch over us, and places us where danger cannot approach. Before again withdrawing for the night, we desire to consecrate these moments to thee, Oh Lord! that sensible of the efficient protection thou hast been pleased to provide, we may close our eyes. mingling thanksgivings with our prayers, in cheerful hope and tranquil resignation.

But for thy gracious care, Oh Lord! the elements might destroy us sleeping; fire or inundations might consume or overwhelm; insects and various animals, which creep about in the night. and have no fear of the insensible sleeper, might assail with fatal effect, and in various ways accomplish our destruction; but more than all the rest, wicked men, formidable by day, become still more dangerous to their fellow men in the night. drunken, the dissolute, and the predatory, are then let loose. They prowl about in the dark, intent on mischief, and their outrages frequently extend to robbery and murder. We should be at their mercy, were we not defended, Oh God! by thine. Night favours deeds of culpable audacity, which under its murky veil, are frequently carried further even than their perpetrators originally contemplated. The wretched man, who, coveting another's property, is content to become a thief, is frequently hurried on by the circumstances in which he finds himself, to murder. Such is the beguiling character of sin, that the young transgressor, who, at first, timidly advances in the road of crime, emboldened by the darkness which shrouds his doings from the world, excited by alarm or passion, pursues his dreadful career, till he finds himself a monster.

The body frequently breeds disease, while we sleep. In us the germ of death may be originated this very night. We may awake to pain, find ourselves tortured and benumbed, and health

lost, never to be restored.

Nor is this all. While we recline on our couch, the soul may be sought by the tempter of man, and extravagant follies and sinful thoughts fill our minds. Ungodly projects may be suggested, and schemes, which, at a future time, will prove a fatal snare for our souls, may in these moments be formed.

Possibly, while we sleep, our souls may wander from piety, indulging in wicked delights, revelling in the fruition of vice, which we should blush to

acknowledge in the face of day.

Human nature, ever prone to sin, may be assailed at all times and seasons, with a prospect of its yielding to self-abasement. Humility then should be our constant companion, that we may not rely too arrogantly on our own strength, but hope to escape the danger, through craving all from the goodness of God, whose supporting hand we in-

cessantly require.

Even all that has been said, points to but few of the many perils to which we may be exposed while we seek in slumber a renewal of our strength. The dangers which encompass us are such, that a prudent man would rather commit himself to a stormy sea, in an open boat, than encounter them, if God were not his shield and defence. To him, then, let our solemn prayer ascend-" Lord save, or we perish!" Be thou our shelter, our fortification, and protector, against all the dangers of the night. As we shut up our houses against bodily foes, we will close our hearts against mental assaults, that sin may not approach. We praise thy goodness and mercy, for that up to this period, we have been so happily spared. Now, come what may, Oh God, thy will be done! and we prepare with devout submission, to bow to thy decree; thoroughly satisfied, that whatever affliction in this life may overtake us, thou wilt still be gracious, and it will prove but a paternal chastisement, destined in the fulness of time, to promote our future welfare, that through thy ample mercy, endless joy may eventually be our portion for ever.

#### IMPORTANT AND AWFUL VISITATIONS IN SLEEP.

When God vouchsafed to speak to his prophets, it was usually in dreams or visions; under which two methods the Jews include all kinds of prophecy. Vision was a trance and ecstasy, in which the senses were suspended, and the vision wrought upon the fancy: the dream was looked upon as a less perfect degree, in which the senses were in some measure, though not totally suspended. The awful posture of the mind after such an honour vouchsafed it, the strong impression of the vision upon it, and the darkness which accompanied the revelation of things future and but partially shown, naturally led the speaker to deliver himself, as with an extraordinary commotion and grandeur, so also with some obscurity, arising from the very nature, as well as to the remote distance of the subject spoken of. When the imagination was thus become, or believed to be, the throne of prophecy, when dreams and trances were thought its usual assistants to subdue and quell the interruption of the senses, and when a vehement and rapturous elocution was generally the manner in which they disburdened themselves of their prophecies; no wonder that those who had over-lively imaginations from nature, or over-heated by art, soon grew into persons inspired -swoonings, vapours, hysterics, epileptics, and absence of mind were looked upon as signs of divine communication; and the rhapsodies and ravings of men beside themselves, how unintelligible or inconsistent soever, were esteemed by many as the revelation of heaven. The pagan priests and oracles appeared under the same circumstances, whether from distemper, deceit, or diabolical possession is needless to inquire here; but this introduced such confusion of judgment, as made it difficult to distinguish the true and false prophets. Thus was our blessed Saviour welcomed by the Jews, when he warmly rebuked them for their sins, and talked of another fold, which belonged to him; that he would suffer them to put him to death, and then would raise himself again to life. They looked upon such discourse as the ravings of a distempered brain, crying out, 'he hath a devil, and is mad.' So also were the apostles and their little primitive church represented. The pathos and energy with which they spake in other tongues the wonderful works of God, unfolding the great mysteries of his dispensation, were looked upon as unintelligible jargon, and the rants of men in their cups. 'These men,' said the hearers, 'are full of new wine.' From both these narratives we may draw two useful conclusions; first, that the external show and apparatus of prophecy might be counterfeited by evil spirits, and imitated by art or nature. Our Saviour never tells his objectors, though often twitted in the same manner that it was impossible or unlikely for men possessed or distempered, to behave in such a manner. Neither did St. Pater, with the eleven, vindicate themselves and few assocare, acting under the influences of the Holy Spirit, as if even was they had done was quite beyond the power of charms and potions. It was not said, what one would think might very justly have been urged, drunken men can do nothing Lx talk: but they denied the supposition of drunkenness, be save it was not yet past nine in the morning, and it was and a for any of them on that high day of Pentecost to

which the Jews were known to be most tenacious, for any one to taste of liquor before twelve, how improbable must it be for so many to have indulged to excess by nine? This was a fair argument to them, a just defence of Jews to Jews: but it was attended with a still stronger confutation of the scoff, when Peter, with the eleven, addressed themselves to the mockers in a language by them respectively understood, and with great aptness and perspicuity opened to them the scriptures.

Dr. Ridley.

### MORNING.—MAY 19.

#### PROMISED GRACE.

Begin, my tongue, some heavenly theme, And speak some boundless thing; The mighty works, or mightier name, Of our eternal King.

Tell of his wondrous faithfulness, And sound his power abroad; Sing the sweet promise of his grace, And the performing God.

Proclaim salvation from the Lord
For wretched dying men;
His hand has writ the sacred word
With an immortal pen.

Engrav'd, as in eternal brass,
The mighty promise shines,
Nor can the powers of darkness raze
Those everlasting lines.

Golden Treasury.

# THE EYES OF GOD ARE ON THE RIGHTEOUS. PSALM XXXIV.

- 1 I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.
- 3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.
- together.
  4 I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 They looked upon him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.
- 6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7 The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.
- 8 O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.
- 9 O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.
- 10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.
- 11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
- 12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pur-

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

### GOD'S CLAIMS ON MAN'S GRATITUDE.

With the evidences we have within ourselves of the goodness of our God, why should we not exclaim, in the language of scripture, "I will lift up my hands in thy name, and my lips shall praise thee." Than this, what can be more natural or proper at the opening of a new day? It is the work of the Lord that hath still preserved us in existence. We have slept in peace, we have awoke refreshed, and are now prepared to enter with new strength on the labours of our vocation. In all her brightness and magnificence, Nature rejoices in returning light. Should the lips of man, then, omit to sound thy praise?-No; for we feel that we can do nothing more beneficial for ourselves, than to occupy all our thoughts with thy goodness, when we are roused from sleep. Opening our eyes in health and cheerfulness, we are now in a condition to proceed on our journey.

Awake to the calls of duty, and living but to answer them, our thoughts, when we hail a new morning, ought to be occupied with God and his grace. On these, no meaner cares, no sensual desires, no ordinary occupation, should be allowed to intrude. Nothing that pertains merely to our advantage in this perishable life, ought to share our minds; while engaged in devotional exercises, we regard ourselves as the servants of God. Offering our morning prayers, we are under his superintendance. To us a sphere of action has been assigned, in which we ought to be active to deserve his blessing, by rendering ourselves useful to our brethren. We are entrusted with the important charge of scattering the seed, from which a glorious harvest is one day to be reaped, and we shall not go unrewarded.

These thoughts, from day to day, shall be the theme of our early devotions. Their effect will be to render us fit to enter joyfully on our day's work. All vain cares and foolish sorrows they will drive from the heart, animate us to advance in the road which we have to pursue with increased determination, and kindle in our bosoms that sincere desire to do good, that no ingratitude with which our best efforts may be requited, no cruelty which we may have to lament, shall ever

quench, or seriously abate the sacred flame. Mortified as we may be, to find ourselves foiled by those we would fain serve. Being satisfied that our object must gain the approving smile of the Holy One, we must persevere. It may happen that our eyes will not be permitted to behold the happy results which we labour to produce; which our hearts have fondly anticipated—as Moses lived not to behold the promised land; but, for all that, we must not doubt that the Lord will bestow his blessing on the work of truth and love, and that this will one day be apparent to the world.

We desire to keep the cheering thought before us, and never to doubt the bounty of God for the future, remembering what it has been in the days which are past. Let us fix our thoughts on that divine and unchanging love, with which the Father has loved us. It began in the high councils of eternity, and thousands of years have failed to check its salutary flow. We have seen something of the glory of our Lord, as did Paul, in his journey to Damascus; and, dwelling in light, shall we not proclaim his glory, and our own happiness?

To know that our humble exertions in the cause of virtue will hereafter be gloriously apparent, ought to seem above all things dear to our hearts, as we trust they will prove most glorious in their consequences. Such a feeling, properly cultivated, would teach us contentedly to dispense with the favours and the rewards of men. I ittle value should we set on such benefits, as we must be aware it is not always that which is good and right men requite with their best acknowledgments. They look at the name, at the person of the performer. God looks at the performance, at the heart.

Before thee, then, Oh gracious Father! we renew the solemn promise we have heretofore breathed, never, in what remains to us of life, to commence our labours for the day, without attempting to raise our thoughts to thee with warm emotion and lively gratitude. Above all other things, it shall be ours to crave the blessing, protection, and support of our God. Then shall we feel enabled to pursue our pilgrimage with cheerfulness and resolution. Seeking thy benevolence with a lively zeal, our faith will be animated by hope, our virtue constant and persevering, and our lives valuable to our fellow mortals. Distracting doubts will no more be able to interrupt our peace, nor will the crosses of life, however

painful those we may experience, affect our veneration for our mighty Parent; but that love, which is "the fulfilling of the law," will be found in us, preparing us here, for the ineffably greater undying joys of heaven.

#### THE TREE THAT NEVER FADES.

It was one of those bright days in autumn, when the sky was clear and blue, and the water shone with the sparkling beams of the radiant sun. George and Mary had gone into their little garden, long before the bright dew had been brushed from the few flowers it had been their summer's joy to cultivate. The scattered leaves of the rich midsummer's rose lay all around in the little paths their own hands had made. There was a tree in the centre of the garden, which had been the pride of all other trees. Its overhanging branches had shaded the tender plants, when the blazing sun of summer would have closed up and faded their fragrant buds, and at evening the wind, whispering among its leaves, made a mysterious music, which had cheered them many a time after their gardening labours were over. Dearer to them than the loftiest of the forest, was that little tree, every leaf of which they had watched and welcomed, and whose young branches they had often shaken, after the summer's rain, that it might shed on the flowers beneath the glittering rainbow drops. Now, for the first time, they noticed that its glossy

"Mary," said George, "next summer I will not have a garden. Our pretty tree is dying, and I won't love another tree as long as I live. I will have a bird next summer, and

that will stay all winter.

"George, don't you remember my beautiful canary bird, and it died in the middle of the summer, and we planted bright flowers in the ground where we buried it? My bird did not live so long as the tree."

"Well, I don't see as we can love any thing. Little brother died before the bird, and I loved him better than any bird, or tree, or flower. Oh, I wish we could have something to love that wouldn't die."

"George, let us go into the house. I don't want to look

at our tree any longer."

The day passed. During the school hours, George and Mary had almost forgotten that their tree was dying: but at evening, as they drew their chairs to the table where their mother was sitting, and began to arrange the seeds they had been from day to day gathering, the remembrance of their tree came upon them.

"Mother," said Mary, "you may give these seeds to cousin

John: I never want another garden.

"Yes," added George, pushing the papers in which he had carefully folded them, towards his mother, "you may give them all away. If I could find some seeds of a tree that would never fade, I should love to have a garden. I wonder if there ever was such a garden, mother.'

"Yes, George, I have read of a garden where the trees never die."

"A real garden, mother?"

"Yes, my son. In the middle of the garden, I have been told, there runs a pure river of water, clear as crystal, and on ach side of the river is the Tree of Life-a tree that never

"Mother," asked Mary, "can't George and I go there? I wish little brother could go there too."

"Your brother, Mary, is there, and when the Gardener calls you, if you are ready, you may go there too. That garden is heaven, There you may love, and love for ever. There will be no death—no fading there. Let your treasure be the tree of life, and you will have something to which your young hearts can cling, without fear, without disappointment. Love the Saviour here, and he will prepare you to dwell in those green pastures and beside those still waters."

"Mother, how can we love what we don't see?"

"I cannot tell you; but Jesus will be your teacher. Ask him. If you really want to know, he will be your guide. Now, good night, and O, may Jesus' love be a fountain within your hearts, springing up to eternal life."

The next morning, George and Mary went again to their tree. The leaves were more faded, and one or two were quite yellow. Resting on one of the little branches, they saw a folded paper. George opened it. These lines were written :-

> "Pretty tree, with glossy leaves, Stirring in the gentle breeze, How can we tell The fount of love we've given thee; But thou art fading, pretty tree, So now, - farewell.

Thy leaves around us now are spread, And soon they'll every one be dead,-Or, quick decay! Then, wherefore should we cling to thee, Since thou must die, O pretty tree, And canst not stay?

There is a tree that we can love, Blooming by crystal streams above, Beyond the sky. The Tree of Life is ever bright, Radiant with heaven's eternal light It cannot die.

And we'll no longer cling to thee, Birds, and flowers, and pretty tree, For sad and strange, Of every thing 'neath summer's skies, That in earth's fading beauty lies, The thought of change.

American Periodical.

# EVENING.—MAY 19

THE INEFFABLE GLORY OF GOD

How wondrous great, how glorious bright Must our Creator be, Who dwells amidst the dazzling light Of vast infinity.

Our soaring spirits upwards rise Tow'rd the celestial throne, Fain would we see the blessed Three, And the Almighty One.

Our reason stretches all its wings, And climbs above the skies, But still how far beneath thy feet Our grovelling reason lies!

Lord, here we bend our humble souls And awfully adore: For the weak pinions of our mind Can stretch a thought no more.

Thy glories infinitely rise Above our labouring tongue ; In vain the highest serapt, tries To form an equal song.

Watts.

### THE EARTH GIVEN TO MAN BY THE CREATOR. PSALM CXV.

1 Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their

God?

3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but

they smell not:
7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every

one that trusteth in them.

9 O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.

11 Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.

12 The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us: he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great.

14 The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children.

15 Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and

16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

# THINGS INVISIBLE INDICATED BY THINGS VISIBLE.

Though it has been the will of God to conceal from mortals the plans which he has formed, he has not left them without a distinct indication of his will, to regulate their conduct. "The invisible things of Him, from the beginning of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." It is in this season of the year, that the invisible power of God is plainly perceived in his works, but only by those who desire to be awake to his goodness, and to see, in the various productions of the earth, unquestionable evidence of his bounty and of his might. It is only the devoutly meditative mind that can throw light and life on the wonders of nature. The sinful sceptic whose thoughts turn not to God, however learned or intelligent he may be deemed by the sons of men, resembles a wanderer who has lost his way in the night. He can see and understand but little of what the Eternal has performed, and that little he regards with indifference. Thankless for blessings, experiencing more disappointment than pleasure from all that may court his attention, he gropes his way murmuring and dissatisfied, while the righteous man walks in light, and contemplates the manifold beauties of creation with pious awe and unspeakable gratification. Piety is, in itself, light and power to our minds, and nature may be said to be dead, if not viewed in reference to God. We gaze on the meadow, rich in verdure, and adorned with variegated flowers. Beautiful in itself, it is still more delightful to behold, regarded as the work of a mighty and benevolent Deity, ever bountiful to The thoughtless may term the earth's embellishing dress merely grass and flowers; but this is carelessly to pass by what merits steadfast admiration. Careful students of nature will distinguish more than ten species of grass and flowers, and the herbalist multiplies them again by ten, and can prove distinct properties to belong to each.

And let us ask ourselves, if, for him who can thus read nature's book, the smiling meadow is not a more interesting object to look upon, than it can be to the shallow observer, who is only afraid that walking on it will damp his shoes. The unreflecting listener hears in the forest a mere chirping, but those who assiduously give themselves up to the eager investigation of the works of the Creator's hand, not only distinguish the voice of every bird, but from the different sounds which they severally give forth-understand whether they are inviting, repelling, or communicating their wants and desires to each other, and all the various ways in which these little warblers are occupied.

How admirably formed, how variously composed are those objects which nature brings under our observation! And why, just now, is this in a remarkable degree conspicuous? Because it is now, that God, by them, is accomplishing his great purposes. And how? By giving man the perception which enables him to comprehend their worth and beauty, and thus elevating our ideas to sound the praises of our Maker.

Yet, though much is unfolded to mortals, unquestionably there is much which they can never fully learn in this imperfect state of being. Sublimely wonderful is that Providence which governs the destinies of creation. Could we be made fully acquainted with the history of a single swallow or quail, could we know how often these birds escaped from dangers which threatened with instant destruction—could we see how scantily. but how seasonably their food had been meted out to them at various periods, and know all they have experienced in their extended journies over the ocean, or in distant, or, to man, unknown countries—how often wild alarm, boundless joy, enfeebling sickness, and renewed strength, had diversified their brief existence, their story might prove not less interesting than the bloody narratives of crowned tyrants of the human race.

Marvellous objects, wherever we turn our eyes, meet our vision. The wisdom, the might, and loving kindness of the Lord, would certainly become gloriously evident, if we did not heedlessly overlook his works, unmindful of the countless blessings it has been his good pleasure to bestow.

From this lethargy, from this slumber of the soul, it is time that we should rouse ourselves. Adorable God! we see thee in thy works-indifference is warmed into love and admiration. and cold scepticism is no more. True it is we can behold but the smallest portion of the wonders of thy hand; the things that are more important are, for the present, veiled from our sight; but even in this twilight, so to speak, enough of thy great invisible power can be felt, to astonish, to thrill with sacred awe, and compel our hearts to bow in adoration of the eternal power of the Godhead. These feelings we will cultivate and preserve, that we may have faith in thee, O Lord! and that faith, rendering us pious and sincere worshippers here, may fit us for a state of eternal happiness.

Thy blessing we now implore, O gracious God, and humbly beseach thee, that in the coming morrow, retaining the impressions we now prove, we may exert ourselves with more determined energy than heretofore, to advance in that path which thou hast marked out for thy faithful

worshippers. Punish not our past negligence and levity, but grant that, retiring to our couches, peaceful slumbers may descend on our eyelids, that we may rise refreshed, to devote our thoughts, our wishes, our all, to thy glory.

MARCH OF MORTALITY, AND CONSOLATIONS ON THE ROAD.

Saurin preached at Rotterdam, on New-year's day, 1727, from Psalm xc. 12. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." He begins thus:-"By what privilege does this church nourish so many members in its bosom, to assist in the solemnity of this day, and to compose an assembly so numerous? By what privilege are you with your children, friends, fellow-citizens?—not all
—for the mourning, which covers some of you, tells me,
death has taken away one part the last year." Having finished his exordium, by briefly observing the relation the words as a prayer of Moses had to the Israelites, and by addressing a short prayer to God to succeed his endeavours, he says, "Let us apply this to our life, which is so much like that which the Israelites passed in the desert, let us first reckon our days; and, secondly, attend to the conclusions which wisdom draws from the account." First, he reckons those days wherein we feel neither good nor evil, joy nor sorrow, and in which we practise neither vice nor virtue, and which he calls days of vanity; these he numbers and compares with days of reality. Secondly, ne numbers our days of adversity with those of prosperity. Thirdly, he compares our days of weariness and disgust with our days of joy and pleasure. Fourthly, he compares those devoted to the world, with those dedicated to religion; and finally, reckons to what the whole amounts. He then passes to the conclusions which wisdom draws, and maintains the applicatory turn to the end.

Of this kind also is a sermon of Fenelon, on true and solid

piety. The text is Isaiah xxxviii. 15 .- "I shall go softly all my years, in the bitterness of my soul. He begins by observing how necessary it is for sinners to make an exact scrutiny of their sins, that they may humble themselves before God, and even for the greatest saints, lest their very graces become hurtful, or the means of inspiring them with pride, presumption, and self-complacence. "The deceitful balances of the world, adds he, which the scripture calls abominable, are very different from those which the justice of God uses to weigh our actions; let us not content ourselves with a conduct outwardly regular, let us examine whether the essence of piety be in our sentiments and actions. Let us make this examination in regard to God, ourselves, and our neighbours. First, Do you love to suffer for God? Should you believe all his mysteries, your sacrifice would be imperfect, if your will remained unmortified. In vain you follow Jesus Christ, unless you carry the cross with him; in vain you hope for his glory and kingdom, unless you partake of his reproaches and sufferings. Secondly, Are you disposed to die to be united for ever to Christ? There is I know not what infidelity in our hearts, which stifles all these sentiments. Who, to see the pains we take to render this life long and agreeable, who would believe we expect another, perfectly happy and eternal? Thirdly, Are we glad to be employed in the service of God? That is to say, do we feel a sincere joy, when we pray, and meditate in his presence? Prayer is the measure of our love; he that loves much, prays much; he that loves little prays little; he whose heart is closely united to God, has no greater consolation than that of enjoying the presence of the object he loves. Fourthly, Are we determined to give ourselves up disinterestedly to God? Do we regard the care of his providence as our best resource? Whence is it, that so many people undertake good works without success? It is because they undertake them without faith, it is because they do not renounce them-Robinson.

# MORNING.-MAY 20.

THE HUMBLE CHRISTIAN'S AIM.

Lord, if thou thy grace impart, Poor in spirit, meek in heart, I shall as my master be, Rooted in humility.

Simple, teachable, and mild, Chang'd into a little child; Pleas'd with all the Lord provides, Wean'd from all the world besides.

Father, fix my soul on thee, Every evil let me flee; Nothing want beneath, above : Happy in thy precious love.

Golden Treasury.

THE GOOD SHALL NOT PERISH. ROMANS XI.

7 Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but he election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a

trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and

bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of

the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead ?

16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive

18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

FROM CORRUPTION, WE SHALL BE RAISED IN INCORRUPTION.

The inevitable fate of man dooms him to sink into the grave, to undergo decomposition, or apparently to cease to be, but for the essential part, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." Of this sentence of the apostle, we are reminded daily at this season of the year, when, on every side, regenerated nature is beheld rising, as born anew out of corruption, and shining gloriously in fresh verdure, and renovated beauty. To nature then, let our hearts turn for holy consolation, when reminded that we have grown older by another spring, and are consequently, nearer by a span to the grave. Shall the shortness of life, the speed with which our fleeting days pass away, and the nearer approach of death, fill us with alarm? No; we will repel vain apprehension, while reminded by the fresh verdure of the meadow, and the opening buds of the garden, that if we are one day "sown in corruption, we shall be raised in incorruption." Each of these seem to say to the Christian observer, he who caused me to be sown in dishonour, and who has raised me in glory, will also do the like by thee. What we know of them should be regarded as a pledge, that our lives will hereafter be recommenced in strength, though here they may draw to a close in weakness. Is not this enough, is not this all we want to render us cheerful and satisfied, while we contemplate our growing years, our decreasing strength, and the various evidences of our bodily frailty, and corruptibility, which announce that we approach our end? Can we rationally sigh for more? Have we not in this all we could desire, that we may not weakly fret as our waning years pass away, in miserable anticipation of the pain we shall experience in our old age, when many enjoyments, at present dearly prized, shall be withdrawn, to be recalled no more? It is not for men who know the goodness of the Supreme Being, to frighten themselves by looking at shadows. Let us consider if death ought not to be regarded as opening to us the passage by which we reach a higher state of being, and thus delivering us from all the cares, toils, and burdens of this troubled scene; and therefore, as the passage to a better life, which will know no end Viewed by this light, all the dread with which we had been accustomed to view death, at once vanishes, and we calmly expect the coming of that day, which will consign our mortal forms to the repose of the grave. We can think of it not only with composure, but we can rejoice in the approach of a new life, when we may be admitted to the presence of our Lord.

Such reflections have an important effect on our present bearing. Our morality is refined, and invigorated by the contemplation of that glorified nature, which we hope will be ours. To feel assured that our exertions, privations, and the various struggles which we have to know in this life, will not be in vain; that compensation for all awaits us elsewhere, gives us strength to employ our time wisely, and to adhere with resolution to that course, which we hold it our duty to pursue. It will enable us to subdue evil desires rising in our hearts, which would make us covet perishable things, forgetful of higher objects which ought to engross all our thoughts.

But while we say this, we affect not that stoicism which would despise all terestrial comforts. They are to be welcomed with thankfulness, as they come from the giver of all good. These properly used, and enjoyed with moderation, may lead to God; but permitted exclusively to occupy the heart, they cause a falling off in virtue, and great sorrow must follow, as this will cause us to be vain, worldly minded, and forgetful

of eternity.

It is then obviously for our benefit and instruction, that reviving nature awakens in us the consciousness, that a time is coming, when all which nowcharms our senses, must lose its value. Having this in our contemplation, we desire from this day forward, great Sovereign of the universe, solemnly to devote ourseves to thee. It is our wish to renounce all former lords, that in our weakness we have suffered to hold dominion over To thee we would fain consecrate all our faculties, our minds as well as our bodies; our worldly possessions; our time; our influence over others; all we desire to render subservient to thy glory. Oh, may we, while life remains, seek but to employ ourselves in obedience to that which thou mayest command, with an ardent desire to be numbered among thy faithful worshippers, and to remaim thine for ever. Humbly, patiently, but zealously, we will seek to know thy will, ready at its first intimation to spring forward joyfully, in order, so far as depends upon us, to give it

Lord of the just, we ask not from thy bounty worldly riches. We aspire to treasures not of this earth, which, by thy favour, in due season. we hope to find. To conquer our wicked passions, to cultivate for good purposes those powers which thou hast entrusted to us, that, in future actions, may not be offensive in thy sight, is the sincere desire of our hearts. Thus do we hope to prepare ourselves for thy everlasting kingdom. Such being our aim, we feel new energies looking forward to future glory, in the fondly cherished conviction, that it will eventually be ours to enter into the joy of our Lord.

GOD'S GRACE ALONE SAVES THE SINNER PLUNGED IN WORLDLY COBRUPTION.

"It was a weary matter for a man of himself to fall into hell, but it is impossible for him to get out again, unless by the help of God's-Grace; I terme him into hell, who lives in continual wickednesse, committing sin with delight, for if he die in that state, hell is his reward; but in this life, if he repent there is hope and salvation, for by God's-Grace he may be comforted and delivered. Therefore, man of himselfe falleth into perdition, but without God's-Grace he cannot rise, God, therefore, seeing his creature given to all vanitie, led with ambition of worldly honor, and not ceasing his sinful life, oftentimes sends adversity, diseases, dishonors, and confusion in the world, to make him humble, and to open the eyes of reason, which voluptuousness had shut, whereby he may come to the knowledge of his sins, and confess the same

"When I was out of the bog, humbly on my knees I gave thanks to God's-Grace for his goodness, being assured that he to whom God does good is not worthy thereof, if he is not thankful. Then God's-Grace marched his way before me, saying that I should follow her, the which I did, for doubtlesse our free-will guideth not God's-Grace, but God's-Grace guideth our free-will. Then I followed her all to be-dagled, until wee came where I had seene the pallace of Worldly Felicitie in greatest glory, turned into a deep dungeon of darkness, boyling with consuming fire, whence came a wilde vapour and stinking smoake of burning brimstone, over the which we must pass by a little plank: whereat I was afraid. so that the hair of my heade stood on ende; then with sorrowful sighs I beseached God's-Grace to tell me the sight which I saw: (quoth she) this is the place of thy voluptuous pallace with all thy allies, amongst whom thou was entertained. Mark well if I had not beene thy helpe and shewed thee mercie, thou hadst been plagued with them. Thinke with thyselfe, if the place be pleasant or no. Thou seest how the devil handleth those that be here with torments. This is the Grey King Lucifer, whom thou supposedst to have seene accompanied with so many nobles in the pallace of Counterfait Felicitie—these be they that frie in the furnace. Here is the reward of such as serve him. Then we saw a great bed grow red hot, wherein lay a naked woman whom a great This miserable woman, lamenting, cryed dragon imbraced. aloud with terrible noise. This (quoth God's-Grace) is the brave bed wherein thou layest, and this woman the Goddess of Love, which kept thee company; wouldst thou be glad now to serve her? To which I answered, no. Thou seest (quoth she) this is the end of voluptuous livers and wicked worldlings. Ask her, then, now where are her Pleasure and Voluptuousness. Alas, lady, (quoth I) for feare I dare not;

then with a loud voyce she began particularly asking the question, saying, O cursed outcasts of God and wretched worldlings, where are now your fair chambers hanged with silke tapestrie, goodly gardens, game dogs of all sorts, your birdes, your horses, your brave apparel, your delicate wines, your change of meales, your sweet waters and servantes, cookes and butlers, your ladies of love, and such like: O unhappy people, your change is great, &c. &c. Then over the high mountaines and ragged rocks away we walked till we came to a crosse way, where Vertue wished me to follow her, whose sayings when I called to minde, it made me weep bitterly for my sinnes and follies past. But when God's-Grace perceived me to be weary and 'noyed with the smells that I found in that loathsome lake, for pity she took me in her armes, and at the last she shewed me the school of repentance, whither I must goe before I could enter into true felicitie."

When we approached to the school of repentance, which was built upon a high hill, environed with a moate named Humility, God's-Grace called, and outcame Lady Repentance in plaine apparel, having next her naked skin a smock of haire-cloath, and upon the same a gowne of sack-cloth, girded together with a great leather girdle, a kercher of coarse canvise upon her head. With her also came two waiting maids, named Sorrow-for-sinne and Confession-of-sinnes, both apparelled like their lady. The first seemed very sorrowfulle and sadde, and the second was bashfulle and shamefas't, and hung downe her head. Then God's-Grace spake to Repentance, and presenting me unto her, said, here is a knight which I have brought to thy schoole, that he might forget the vill that he hath learned abroad, and to be instructed in the good which he never yet knew.

"Then, as we were talking, God's-Grace said unto me, Sir Knight, I give thee for thy governour, this good hermit Understanding; believe his counsel and do what he commands you; then I remembered my old governess Folly, whom I left in the bogge amongst serpents and toads. So I was very glad of my governour and gave thanks to God's-Grace, who, from the table gave me drugs to eate, and repeated unto me a place written in the eighty-eight Psalm of David, 'open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.'"

Goodyeare's Voyage of the Wandering Knight.

# EVENING.-MAY 20.

#### PROGRESS OF THE WORD.

How shall the young secure their hearts, And guard their lives from sin: Thy word the choicest rules imparts To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind, It spreads such light abroad, The meanest souls instruction find, And raise their thoughts to God.

'Tis like the sun, a heav'nly light, That guides us all the day: And thro' the dangers of the night, A lamp to lead our way. 6 K

The men that keep thy law with care, And meditate thy word. Grow wiser than their teachers are. And better know the Lord.

Thy precepts make me truly wise; I hate the sinner's road : I hate my own vain thoughts that rise, But love thy law, my God.

Watts.

### THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS. EPHESIANS IV.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling:

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all,

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ,

8 Wherefore he saith, When ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things;

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive:

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ :

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of

their mind.

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

### RELIGION NOT TO BE TAKEN AS A MATTER OF COURSE.

He who holds himself to be a rational being, capable of distinguishing between good and evil, ought, in the exercise of common sense, to prefer the former to the latter, and in the language of scripture, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." This precept invites us to be Christians, not merely in form, but in reality; to investigate. and on proof to believe. What, in point of fact, would religion be without meditation? what hope

and faith, if we were ignorant of their foundation? Were it deemed superfluous to inquire into the principles of Christianity, and the truths which it embodies; all the various religions which the folly and the waywardness of man have established in different parts of the globe, would be equally good, and it would be a matter of indifference to which of them we gave in our adhesion. Great are the dangers to which the virtue, and the peace of that man are exposed, who has received his faith like a heir-loom from his parents, who finds himself the unreasoning depository of another's thoughts, the truth or falsehood of which he has never essayed to prove. The wit of the free-thinker, the scoffings of folly, will be likely soon to rob him of those precious jewels, piety and humility, and to hurl him into an abyss of misery, from which no time, no penitence can rescue him.

Not such is the case of those, who, having exerted the powers of their minds to "prove all things," at last, from honest conviction, hold fast to Jesus, and find in him a friend who relieves and assists the anxious searcher after holy truth,

more tenderly than a brother.

It will become us not merely to profess that we are religious, but strictly to examine ourselves as to the grounds on which we make that profession. Let us call ourselves to an account. We aver that we are Christians. But why are we so, and how did we become so? perhaps it was merely because our parents and instructors, were of the Christian faith. Is this so, and do we merely say we believe what the church teaches, without having troubled ourselves to meditate on the solemn subject, or to inquire into its truth or origin? If this be so, we are far from being in that situation in which we ought to stand. Though it be granted that reason cannot explore all the mysteries of religion, we at least ought to know why we deem them worthy of belief. But we have no time for mentioning all the minutiæ of theology. That may be, but we are at least able to think for ourselves, so far as to be provided with arms to defend our faith against the insidious arguments of sceptics and scoffers. Difficulties are to be encountered at the commencement of every study. In this respect, therefore, the study of religion has in it nothing singular, and happily we have pious brethren who are able and willing to instruct us: and more than that, we have the promise that the Holy Ghost will lead us into all truth, if we only devoutly pray for its aid, and apply ourselves to search the scripture. To the Bible then let our anxious inquiries be directed, that our faith may gain a sure foundation in knowledge.

Luke-warm professor of faith, dost thou pretend that a Christian could not be blamed for having adopted the religion of his parents, without inquiry or suspicion. Such a thought ought not to be entertained. There is nothing in the relation of child and parent, that should preclude human beings like ourselves, anxious for their immortal souls, from examining the faith which they are content to profess, and in which all of us were registered in our infancy, when we have gained sufficient years and faculties for thinking, and for deciding for ourselves.

We are told to love God with all our heart and soul. To do this, we must make use of our reason; and if he is a spirit who can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth, to offer acceptable homage to him, we must shew that it is not a matter of indifference to us, whether what we call

our religion, be based on truth or error.

We, then, must seek the truth. Humbling ourselves before the great Author of our being, let us pray that his gracious assistance may not be withheld, while we anxiously solicit to be directed into the path which leads to heaven. Then shall we learn to fear the Lord our God, and to hide beneath the shadow of his wings. Craving that our minds may expand, that the sacred truths contained in the Bible, may not be to us as a sealed book, we shall hope that our reason will be so far aided and strengthened, that we may "apply our hearts unto true wisdom."

Thus seeking knowledge, we shall soon lift our eyes above the scenes in which we now move, and fix our thoughts on immortality. Then shall we ask ourselves, if, in the regions of light, there may not be different degrees of bliss? Teachers of the sacred law may shine in heaven with a glory of their own, like the stars for evermore; the bright reward of their generous labours on earth, to lead the weary into the paths of righteousness. Such an office, worthily assumed, should be viewed as the greatest of honours. But who shall dare to assume that he is able to teach righteousness, and to conduct his fellow men to everlasting happiness, who has not first applied himself to store his own mind with profound self-knowledge?

Oh Jesus! Saviour of man, those who read thy wondrous story with due attention, and a mind open to conviction, confess that thy doctrine is divine wisdom. Through that it has been thy good pleasure to call us out of darkness into mar-

vellous light. The empty shadow of blind unreasoning, unknowing faith, we have put away, and from reading thy word, as enlightened Christians, we offer our thanks, for that thou hast given us knowledge and power, to defend thy great cause against all the assaults of the infidel, and the enemies of truth. To this point we desire still more earnestly to address our thoughts. In many instances where worldly trifles were in question, we have been thought to deal with them ingeniously. Still more successfully enable us to applyour minds to sacred things-to those matters which are infinitely more important than all else besides. Open more and more our eyes, that we may better see the wonders of thy law, and more and more of thy goodness and glory, so that concluding our morning and evening devotions, from day to day, we may declare with the fervour of true conviction, "I know in whom I have believed."

#### GOD'S REVELATION.

The Israelites had come out of Egypt as a company of undisciplined slaves, and were not yet formed into any regular society. To curb their licentious spirit, and to render them a powerful and prosperous nation, it was indispensably requisite that some mode of government should be established among them, and laws enacted for the regulation of their conduct. But who could undertake the arduous task? We say not that the abilities of Moses were incompetent for the purpose. But, whatever his talents were, he was not influenced by the ambitious views of human politicians, nor did he seek any honour or authority for himself. He acted, throughout the whole business, only as the agent of God, from whom he received his directions, and who reserved in his own hands the settlement of all their affairs. For it was the divine counsel to separate this people from all others, and to distinguish them by such appointments and ordinances, as no legislator among men would or could have contrived.

When, therefore, they came to Sinai, a solemn pause was made for a whole year; and the mount, by which they en-camped, was rendered most memorable by the visions and revelations of the Lord upon it. Moses was summoned; and by him a message was sent to to the Israelites, requiring them to enter into a compact with Jehovah. It was proposed, on the part of God, that he would be their chief magistrate, their lawgiver, and their king; and from them was exacted a promise of unfeigned subjection and obedience. Under this peculiar covenant they were to be incorporated as a nation; and it was stipulated, that, while they continued faithful to the engagement, the Lord would secure to them the possession of Canaan, and favour them with abundant privileges and prosperity. The nature of the divine administration was to be further opened to them by the promulgation of those statutes, to which their submission was expected. But that the commands of such a legislator might not be slighted, every circumstance in the delivery of the law was so ordered, as to leave upon their minds an awful impression of the majesty, the purity, and the justice of their supreme and almighty governor. It was also intended throughout this amazing transaction, to put a distinguished honour upon Moses, as God's immediate minister, that they might never afterwards question his authority, or reject his precepts.

For this grand display of the glory of their sovereign, and for the ratification of the covenant between the righteous God and his polluted creatures, preparations were made three days before. When the appointed time was come, the Lord God gave the summons, and cited them, as it were, to his tribunal. "There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice."

Well indeed may we cry out, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" Even Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." But we are warned of a still more tremendous display of the glorious majesty of our God; when not Sinai only, but the whole earth shall be on fire, and when also not the Jewish nation alone, but the universal race of mankind shall be assembled before him. "But who may abide the day of his coming?" For "he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of

our Lord Jesus Christ."

Yet while the people were kept at a profound distance, and forbidden to gaze, or to speculate with idle curiosity upon the august appearance, Moses was admitted to a nearer view, we had almost said, to a familiar intercourse with the Deity. And herein he prefigured the Saviour ascending up on high, and approaching unto God for us. Those also, who are reconciled to God, may, notwithstanding the tremendous denunciations of his wrath, look up with joy, and have access into his presence with a holy boldness.

Robinson's Scripture Characters.

# MORNING.-MAY 21.

DEATH OBEYS THE LORD.

When I can trust my all with God, In trial's fearful hour, Bow, all resign'd, beneath his red, And bless his sparing power; A joy springs up amid distress, A fountain in the wilderness.

Oh! to be brought to Jesus' feet,
Though sorrows fix me there,
Is still a privilege; and sweet
The energies of prayer,
Though sighs and tears its language be,
If Christ be nigh, and smile on me.

Oh! blessed be the hand that gave;
Still blessed when it takes:
Blessed be he who smites to save,
Who heals the heart he breaks:
Perfect and true are all his ways,
Whom heaven adores, and death obeys,

Gems of Sacred Foetry.

CHRIST CAME NOT TO DESTROY MEN'S LIVES, BUT TO SAVE THEM. LUKE IX.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready

for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as

though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know

not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee witherso-ever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me, But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

THE WEAKNESS AND FOLLY OF SHRINKING FROM THE CONTEMPLATION OF DEATH.

By thee, Creator of the universe, all things are ordained. "Man sees his days are determined; the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds which he cannot pass." Whatever the various accidents may be, which in the course of his sojourn here, he is destined to know, of one thing only is he certain, that he must die. That is, beyond a doubt, inevitable: the hour of his death must come,—the hour of his consummation. Our hearts shrink with apprehension and horror at the thought, and we are too ready to turn it aside by some trifling occupation or idle amusement, when we are startled by hearing of the dissolution of a friend or relative, for whom we are nearly concerned. Yet this is anything but wise. Reason, did we listen to its useful, though unpalatable counsel, would whisper that we ought to seek, by all possible means, to conquer the enemy we cannot hope to conciliate and soften, and whom it is impossible to escape; and the enlightened Christian, seeking God in prayer, will be disposed to say, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is;" or "so teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto true wisdom," To know ourselves, is true wisdom, and this possessed, will guard us against undue attachment to worldly toys, and cause us to act a more prudent part, by laying up treasures in Heaven, while such a habit of thinking, once acquired, will give us becoming firmness to meet the enemy, and strip death of his terrors.

Convinced that this is true policy, we will at once combat the aversion we feel to suffer our thoughts to dwell on the great change we have to undergo, and the ghastly images associated with the grave. We will frequently represent to ourselves the coming of the final scene, that when it actually arrives, it may not try our strength too severely. We will place death constantly before our eyes, that we, by living in the Lord, may be prepared to die in the Lord, and gain the reward of the righteous, a life that will

know no end—immortal glory.

The man, who, while engaged in the arduous duties of a busy life, never forgets that he must, at no distant period, resign his breath, may really be said to live for heaven, and as his mortal days decline, he sees the gates of a happier state of being thrown open to admit him to the presence of his God. How desirable then is it for us to make our minds familiar with the momentous event, our departure from this world, lest the final hour come suddenly upon us, ere we have brought ourselves to that point of resignation, and holy hope, which might best fit us for our passage.

Much of the affection experienced by a man who has lived in the enjoyment of social ties, arises from a knowledge of the grief which his decease must cause to those who are dear to him, to whom he has ever been dear. Would he generously wish to comfort those whom he must leave behind? to convert their bitter tears into radiant smiles of holy hope? How can he so well accomplish his generous purpose, as by leading a life which shall establish in their hearts a satisfactory conviction, that death cannot surprise him unawares—that their loss is his gain; and knowing his piety, they have not to mourn a beloved friend that has been consigned to the earth, but

rather that a blessed spirit, fitted for celestial bliss, has been translated to heaven.

By resolute endeavours to acquire that firmness, and that unvielding faith, which will carry us safely through all the trials of an eventful life, we would prepare for ourselves a happy passage, from time to eternity. By a life of piety, by a careful performance of the several duties which devolve upon us; by proving ourselves faithful to the end, we will strive to afford substantial comfort to the objects of our tender regard, in giving them cause to remember us with kindness, love, and veneration. It is by acting thus, that we can secure for them the best inheritance mortal man can leave behind, and we ourselves shall continue to have a salutary influence over them, when we can see them no more; shall be enabled to promote their welfare, while our faded remains are at rest in the sepulchre.

And thus will our anxious labours, the most onerous duties of life, be, with greater use, more satisfactorily brought to a close. The works at which we have toiled, may be safely left in the hands of those who are to succeed us. Satisfied that they will zealously guard, and actually promote what we have planned for their advantage, we may calmly enjoy the thought, that when in the course of nature they find themselves deprived of our superintending care, they will never be oppressed by good men; never be forsaken by their God; and they may safely indulge the soothing sacred hope, that they will one day rejoin us, where no new separation will await us, and where

all is harmony and joy.

Away then with the foolish aversion to entertaining thoughts of death. A weakness so degrading must be conquered. It is thy ordinance, Oh Lord! and it must be good, for thou knowest all things. Supported by this assurance, we will ever bear in mind, that "Man has his determined days, and that thou hast appointed his bounds." The comfort, the substantial blessing, the celestial joy to be derived from such a source, we have not now to learn; and we humbly implore thee to grant all that we want, by cleansing our hearts, and strengthening our minds, that as we advance to the completion of our destiny, we may realize a benefit so truly important.

#### MEDITATIONS AMONG THE TOMBS.

My apprehensions recover from their surprise; I find here are no phantoms, but such as fear raises. However, it still amazes me to observe the wonders of this nether world; those

who received vast revenues, and called whole lordships their own, are here reduced to half a dozen feet of earth, or confined in a few sheets of lead. Rooms of state, and sumptuous furniture, are resigned, for no other ornament than the shroud, for no other apartment than the darksome niche. Where is the star that blazed upon the breast, or coronet that glittered round the temples? The only remains of departed dignity are, the weather-beaten hatchment, and the tattered escutcheon. I see no splendid retinue surrounding this solitary dwelling; the lordly equipage hovers no longer about the lifeless master; he has no other attendant than a dusty statue, which, while the regardless world is as gay as ever, the sculptor's hand has taught to weep.

Those who gloried in high-born ancestors and noble pedigree, here drop their lofty pretensions; they acknowledge kindred with creeping things, and quarter arms with the meanest reptiles; they say to corruption, "Thou art my father; and to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister." Or, should they still assume the style of dictinction, ah! how important were the claim; how apparent the ostentation! Is it said by their monument, Here lies the great? How easily

is it replied by the spectator !-

Nothing but poor and sordid dust lies here.

Mortifying truth! sufficient, one would think, to wean the most sanguine appetite from the transitory state of things; from its sickly satisfactions, its fading glories, its vanishing treasures.

For now, ye lying vanities of life! Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train! Where are you now? And what is your amount?

What is all the world to these poor breathless beings? What are their pleasures? A bubble broke. What their honours? A dream that is forgotten. What the sum-total of their enjoyments below? Once, perhaps, it appeared to be inexperienced and fond desire, something considerable; but now death has measured it with his line, and weighed it in his scale, what is the up-shot? Alas! it is shorter than a span; lighter than the dancing spark, and driven away like the dissolving smoke.

Indulge, my soul, a serious pause; recollect all the gay things, that were wont to dazzle thy eyes and inveigle thy affections; here, examine those baits of sense; here, form an estimate of their value. Suppose thyself, first, among the favourites of fortune, who revel in the lap of pleasure, who shine in the robes of honour, and swim in tides of inexhausted riches; yet how soon will the passing bell proclaim thy exit! And when once that iron call has summoned thee to thy future reckoning, where would all these gratifications be? At that period, how will all the pageantry of the most affluent, splendid, or luxurious circumstances, vanish into empty air! And is this a happiness so passionately to be coveted?

I thank you, ye relies of sounding titles and magnificent names; ye have taught me more of the littleness of the world, than all the volumes of my library. Your nobility arrayed in a winding-sheet, your grandeur mouldering in an urn, are the most indisputable proofs of the nothingness of created things. Never, surely, did Providence write this important point in such legible characters, as in the ashes of my Lord, or on the corpse of his grace. Let others, if they please, pay their obsequious court to your wealthy sons, and ignobly fawn, or anxiously sue for preferments. My thoughts shall often resort, in pensive contemplation, to the sepulchres of

their sires; and learn, from their sleeping dust—to moderate my expectations from mortals—to stand disengaged from every undue attachment to the little interests of time—to get above the delusive amusements of honour, the gaudy tinsels of wealth, and all the empty shadows of a perishing world.

Hark! what sound is that!—In such a situation, every noise alarms. Solemn and slow, it breaks again upon the silent air—'Tis the striking of the clock; designed, one would imagine, to ratify all my serious meditations. Methinks it says Amen, and sets a seal to every improving hint; it tells me, that another portion of my appointed time is elapsed. One calls it, "The knell of my departed hours." 'Tis the watchword to vigilance and activity. It cries in the ear of reason, "Redeem the time: catch the favourable gales of opportunity: O! catch them while they breathe, before they are irrecoverably lost. The span of life shortens continually; thy minutes are all upon the wing, and hasten to be gone; thou art a borderer upon eternity, and making incessant advances to the state thou art contemplating." May the admonition sink deep into an attentive and obedient mind! May it teach me that heavenly arithmetic, of "numbering my days, and applying my heart unto wisdom."

Hervey.

# EVENING.-MAY 21.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

Fairest jewel, brightly shining,
On the beauteous brow of eve,
Warning nature, day declining,
Shades nocturnal to receive;
Herald of the starry legions,
Child of evening and of night,
Welcome to these darksome regions,
Brightly shining orb of light.

Let the Atheistic sinner
Turn his wicked gaze on thee,
Tell who willed that thou should'st glimmer,
And that he should live and see.
If no God conducts thee nightly
To thy cavern in the sky,
Let his senses reason rightly,
He thy light will deify.

Now th' angelic hosts illumine, Myriads of the twinkling train; Day to yonder stars removing, Promises to come again. Hide thy face thou pallid trembler, Night will kill thy flickering beam, Oh! avoid the dark dissembler, Chasing still thy silver gleam.

See, the tender flowers are sleeping, Lulled by thy protecting glance; Spirits in the ether weeping, Mourn their dismal foe's advance; And the nestling seeks his cradle, On the scented hawthorn bough, N ght displays his vest of sable, And the owl is waking now. Live, bright star, till eve appearing,
Bids thee glisten in the sky;
Live till virtue's cause for fearing
Dies, when all that's dark shall die.

J. A. B.

GOD LISTENS TO HIS WORSHIPPER AND SNATCHES
HIM FROM EVIL. PSALM VI.

1 O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord.

heal me; for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?

4 Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: Oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the

5 For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

6 I am weary with my groanings; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

7 Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old

because of all mine enemies.

8 Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord

hath heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord hath

heard the voice of my prayer.

10 Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

# PERFECT RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD, THE CHRISTIAN'S PRIDE.

The parental care of God ought never to be lost sight of by a sincere worshipper. Let us remember the words of the sacred book, "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." A gracious, a comprehensive declaration this. Even if we. for a time, fail to love and honour God, as a child confidently looks up to an earthly parent for kindness, we may look to him, and he will still prove our Father. Yes; Oh thou, to whom, in the waning hour, we now address our thoughts, still wilt thou cause thy sun to shine upon us, and thy light—the light of truth—to beam on thy creatures, that they may live in peace and happiness. All unworthy of such distinguished favour as we are, thy grace in Christ overwhelms us with blessings which, with all our self-love, we cannot imagine we deserve; and we feel that we may rest all our cares on thee, rely upon thy goodness, and in seasons of difficulty; expect thy aid. Even though we fall into sin, there is pity for our weaknesses, and when we repent of our transgressions, there is joy in heaven over the reclaimed wanderer. When we stumble, angels are charged to

protect us, and when we die, Jesus leads his humble followers to that rich inheritance prepared for them, from the creation of the world.

Oh what grace! Oh what mercy is thus extended to sinners! But how—how have we acknowledged blessings so great! Alas! not as grateful children, but as thankless idlers. To us thy commandments were transmitted, but we have failed to obey them. Presuming to examine, and to criticise them, we inquire whether they are wise and useful; and even where we yield obedience, we do so rather as refractory slaves,

than as happy and grateful children.

Our deficiencies are great, our general conduct mournfully reprehensible. Feeling as thy children, we should gladly, we should proudly, at thy call, turn our weak hands to the heaviest task assigned to us, assured that thou wouldest not order us to do that which, favoured by thee, we might not accomplish. Satisfied of thy unfailing goodness, we might lament our own want of strength, but never complain of thy commandments, and earnestly applying ourselves to do all in our power, we should calmly wait for such aids as thou might be pleased to grant, not doubting that, in due time, thy paternal favour would descend upon us. When persecuted, we should contentedly meet the foolish derision of a scornful world, submit, without repining, to bitter mortification and disgrace in thy cause, and never yield to those who mock thee, though tempted by their loud applause, or their costly gifts. Though threatened by malice, like that which induced Peter to deny his Master, the Christian should unshrinkingly stand up in the cause of his Father and his God.

Eternal Parent! listen to the feeble, but earnest efforts at devotion, of those who now stand before thee, and who would fain address thee, as the children of thy love should approach an all-gracious Father. Deign to give ear to our supplications! Extend thy helping hand to thy weak and stumbling petitioners, that if we fall, it may be ours to rise again, and, renouncing our errors, at length become worthy of thy paternal loye.

Gracious Father! in spite of all our sins—all our accusers—still our Father! true it is, we are not worthy to be called thy children; yet we have the happiness to know that thou art more ready to receive us than we to return to thee, so we but present ourselves before thee, sincerely repentant. A contrite heart is all that thou requirest. Give us that wisdom, and those feelings that may enable us to comply with

the requisition. Let the stubborn heart yield to thy continued goodness, and be found in thy presence, full of gratitude and appropriate devotion. Redeemed by the blood of thy only Son, we will not weakly abandon our birthright. Hell shall not rob us of our redemption. Thou mayest punish, thou mayest destroy our bodies, but we thy children will still place all our trust in thee.

Father! into thy hands we commit our spirits. Thou callest us now through the verdant fields and smiling groves, that viewing the beauties of thy creation, we may have a more lovely image of the greatness and goodness of our Creator. We adore thee in thy works. Thou, O Lord! art our true Father. We, though thy offending children, are still the objects of thy care, and into thy hands, in all love and confidence, we commit our spirits.

#### HOPE AND FORTITUDE IN THE DYING.

When word was brought him that Major-General Harrison was dead, he said, "Well, my turn will be next, and as we have gone along in our lives, so must we be one in our death. The Lord God grant, that I may have strength from himself to follow courageously to the last breath; and that I may much honour and glorify God, whom I have made profession of; I can do nothing of myself; but my strength is in the Lord of Hosts, who hath helped me from my beginning to this day, and will help me to the end." The night before he suffered, some of his natural relations came to take their leave of him, and when they were parting, they shed some tears; but when he perceived it he said, "O my friends, if you did know and feel what joy I have, and what a glorious crown I shall receive from the hands of Christ, for this work, you would not mourn, but rejoice, that I am counted worthy to be a witness to this cause;" and said further, "The Lord preserve you all from the portion of this generation; for assuredly, there is great wrath from the Lord, that will reach them to their destruction." When Mr. L. came to take his leave of him, he asked this question (viz.) how it was with him. He answered, "Very well, I bless my God; as to my interest in him I have not the least doubt, but do know assuredly, that when my soul shall be separated from this body, I shall be taken into his presence, where is fulness of joy, and by Jesus Christ be presented to my Father, without spot and blame, in his own complete and perfect righteousness, which is free, and not for mine own works; for I am a poor sinful and wretched creature, and compassed about with many infirmities." And when it was asked him, if he had any thing of conviction upon him as to what he was to suffer for, he answered, "No, not in the least; for," said he, "though man have condemned, yet the Lord hath and doth justifie." He added, the Lord had justified it in the field once already in this nation (but that is now accounted as a thing of nought), but he will again do it with a witness; and prayed that the Lord would deliver him (viz. Mr. L.) from that judgment that was at hand by which he would do it. To this effect spake he also to many that did query with him about this matter-being told that his nephew and some others were doing their utmost for his reprieve, he replied,

that there is nothing to be done: "For the sheriff hath brought me word, just now, that I must die to-morrow, and that there was some that desired I might not be quartered, but it would not be granted. But death is nothing to me, let them quarter my body never so much, God will bring all

those pieces together again."

The day he suffered, and the hour, being come, the rope being tied about him, he rejoiced exceedingly, saying, "Oh! what am I, that I should be bound for the cause and interest of the Son of God? And when he was coming down Newgate stairs, to go into the sledge, in a very smiling, cheerful manner, his countenance smiling with great glory, uttered words to this effect—"My Lord Jesus, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God; whose steps I desire to follow." It was also observed that the cheerfulness of his countenance all the way as he went to the gibbet, remained, to the encouragement of the faithful, and admiration of enemies, uttering by the way many cheerful expressions setting forth his joy in the Lord.—Memorable Passages before the Execution of Mr. John Carew, 1660.

# MORNING.—MAY 22.

EFFECTS OF FATHERLY CHASTISEMENT.

Father, I bless thy gentle hand; How kind was thy chastising rod, That forc'd my conscience to a stand, And brought my wandering soul to God!

Foolish and vain, I went astray,
Ere I had felt thy scourges, Lord,
I left my Guide, and lost my way;
But now I love and keep thy word.

Thy hands have made my mortal frame, Thy Spirit form'd my soul within; Teach me to know thy wondrous name, And guard me safe from death and sin;

Then all that love and fear the Lord
At my salvation shall rejoice;
For I have hoped in thy word,
And made thy grace my only choice.

Watts.

GOD PUNISHES BUT DOES NOT ABANDON HIS PEOPLE. EZERIEL XXXIX.

21 I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.

22 So the the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward.

23 ¶ And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the bword.

24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from hem.

25 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name:

house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name:
26 After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

27 When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified

in them in the sight of many nations;

28 Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

29 Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the

Lord God.

# CONSOLATION UNDER THE SEVEREST TRIALS OF LIFE.

It ought not to be forgotten that, in this world, the true servants of the Lord have often to encounter severe trials. Such visitations ought not to discourage the pilgrim as he journeys on towards the world of spirits. "Faint not, my heart, when thou art rebuked of the Lord," was the exclamation of a wise and a holy man. Painful as it may be, we ought not to deem suffering here even a misfortune. Rightly viewed, the sharpest visitations would be submitted to with unrepining composure. The Christian, properly animated by the faith within him, would be consoled from the thought that, in the end, all would tend to good. The pious heart, resigned to the will of its Lord, must acknowledge that worldly misfortunes furnish the means for developing the immortal spirit, nor doubt but that they will, at the proper time, be followed by an everlasting recompense. Peace is more frequently found in the heart of the Christian sufferer, than in him who, wanting faith in the true God, is seen revelling in all the joy of present prosperity; for the former learns to withdraw himself from the deluding pleasures of a wicked world, from all its vain cares; while the latter, more and more immersed in them, can find no rest. The one insensibly becomes more benevolent, more disposed to judge favourably of all around him; he looks forward with increased hope, and a livelier faith in a better life, and his conversation is of heaven; the other sees nothing but the evanescent glories of to-day; he feels that they must soon be withdrawn from him, and cannot burst the chains which bind him to earth. In mournful circumstances, all that is required of us is, that, with patient humility, we resign ourselves to the will

of the Most High, and if we do that, we shall learn to bear tribulation, not merely with quiet endurance, but with devout cheerfulness.

"Born to sorrow, as the sparks fly upward,"—such is the lot of humanity. Though under the severer inflictions of Providence, the Christian may occasionally sigh, he knows that his case is not one of singular hardship. If, in the first instance, he has succeeded in gaining a perfect control over his mind, his fortitude will thereafter not be too rudely shaken; and, guarded against the error of overrating his own particular sufferings, he will not know pusillanimous discontent, and he will subdue the refractory throbbings of his heart, in the sincere conviction that, let the world desert or persecute him as it may, he still has God for his friend.

If he have further the consolation, that not from his injustice to his fellow-creatures has this grief come over him; if it be not immediately brought upon him by his own misconduct; if his burdens have not been increased by his own luxurious effeminacy or folly, when the language of soothing friendship is addressed to him, by those who can feel for misfortune, Oh! then will he feel that he is secured against any ultimate loss, and, in the fulness of time, all he endures will contribute to his lasting happiness.

May it be ours never to lose sight of this blessed hope! Then we shall wisely abstain from repining at that which our Lord may send to ourselves, or to those who are most dear to us.

How great the consolation derivable from such sources we may speak from our own experience. In former days we have frequently felt that our own patience was soon exhausted; but repeated trials forced upon us, have given us increased strength. We have become, inwardly, more forbearing towards those who have given us The time has been, when we were unoffence. able to refrain from furious outbreaks of temper. when moved by trifling disappointments, and we have thus deprived ourselves of the love, respect, and sympathy of those who were about us. We have rendered the performance of their duties more painful than they ought to have been, and given ourselves hours of bitter uneasiness. Such, we trust we may say, is no longer the case. Obliged to struggle with long protracted sorrows in the school of adversity, we have become wiser, learned to master our unruly tempers, and happily conquered the unchristianlike emotions, the ill humour and vain impatience we formerly exhibited. This we have gained by fervent and often-repeated prayers.

Whence the difference we remark, and on which with reason we congratulate ourselves? It arises from this—formerly we confined our views and our hopes to the timely aid we might receive from our fellow-men; now we look higher, and, not disdaining their assistance, we place our best hopes, our great reliance, on the living God.

And this, we thank divine goodness, we are enabled to do with unaffected meekness and perfect resignation,—a resignation which fails not to afford the wounded heart substantial comfort. Formerly we had not the sublime example of the Saviour of man constantly before our eyes, and in our minds; now, the contemplation of the glorious career which he pursued in this world, is never absent from us. To study that, to imitate it so far as lies in our power, is our favourite occupation. We mark his conduct in Gethsemane; we fix our attention on the agonies he endured for us at Golgotha. To him we are always ready to apply; to him our grateful adoration is offered, and by his blessed Spirit we are marvellously supported.

Even while our griefs yet remain, we may thankfully declare, that, both from God and man we receive comfort. Great, indeed, is that which we have gained from perusing the solemn meditations of wise and holy men, The heart-stirring hymns of pious poets have often assuaged the pangs of deep affliction. These, and the consolations of scripture, have reassured us; they have served to convince our minds, that present suffer ings are not real evils, as they tend to our futur advantage: and sinful indeed should we feel our selves, if thus instructed, in our future troubles, we could lose that confidence which, as Christians, redeemed by a Saviour's love, we should ever possess, or weakly, despondingly faint, when rebuked by our Lord.

#### GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.

The sense of well and ill doing, the presages of conscience, the love of good characters and dislike of bad ones, honour, shame, resentment, gratitude; all these, considered in themselves, and in their effects, do afford manifest real instances of virtue as such naturally favoured, and of vice as such discountenanced, more or less, in the daily course of human life; in every age, in every relation, in every general circumstance of it. That God has given us a moral nature, may most justly be urged as a proof of our being under his moral government: but that he has placed us in a condition, which gives this nature, as one may speak, scope to operate, and in which it does unavoidably operate; i.e. influence man-

kind to act, so as thus to favour and reward virtue, and discountenance and punish vice; this is not the same, but a further, additional proof of his government: for it is an instance of it. The first is a proof, that he will finally favour and support virtue effectually: the second is an example of his favouring and supporting it at present, in some degree.

If a more distinct inquiry be made, whence it arises, that virtue as such is often rewarded, and vice as such is punished, and this rule is never inverted: it will be found to proceed in part, immediately from the moral nature itself, which God has given us; and also in part, from his having given us, together with this nature, so great a power over each other's happiness and misery. For, first, it is certain, that peace and delight, in some degree and upon some occasions, is the necessary and present effect of virtuous practice; an effect arising immediately from that constitution of our nature. We are so made, that well doing as such gives us satisfaction, at least, in some instances; ill doing as such, in none. And, secondly, from our moral nature, joined with God's having put our happiness and misery in many respects in each other's power, it cannot but be, that vice as such, some kinds and instances of it at least, will be infamous, and men will be disposed to punish it as in itself detestable; and the villain will by no means be able always to avoid feeling that infamy, any more than he will be able to escape this further punishment, which mankind will be disposed to inflict upon him, under the notion of his deserving it. But there can be nothing on the side of vice, to answer this; because there is nothing in the human mind contradictory, as the logicians speak, to virtue. For virtue consists in a regard to what is right and reasonable, as being so, in a regard to veracity, justice, charity, in themselves: and there is surely no such thing, as a like natural regard to falsehood, injustice, cruelty. If it be thought, that there are instances of an approbation of vice, as such, in itself, and for its own sake (though it does not appear to me, that there is any such thing at all; but supposing there be), it is evidently monstrous: as much so, as the most acknowledged perversion of any passion whatever. Such instances of perversion then being left out, as merely imaginary, or, however, unnatural; it must follow, from the frame of our nature, and from our condition, in the respects now described, that vice cannot at all be, and virtue cannot but be, favoured as such by others, upon some occasions, and happy in itself, in some degree. For what is here insisted upon, is not the degree in which virtue and vice are thus distinguished, but only the thing itself, that they are so in some degree; though the whole good and bad effect of virtue and vice as such, is not inconsiderable in degree. But that they must be thus distinguished in some degree, is in a manner necessary: it is matter of fact of daily experience, even in the greatest confusion of human affairs.

It is not pretended but that in the natural course of things, happiness and misery appear to be distributed by other rules, than only the personal merit and demerit of characters. They may sometimes be distributed by way of mere discipline. There may be the wisest and best reasons, why the world should by governed by general laws, from whence such promiscuous distribution perhaps must follow; and also why our happiness and misery should be put in each other's power, in the degree which they are. And these things, as in general they contribute to the rewarding virtue and punishing vice, as such: so they often contribute also, not to the inversion of this, which is impossible; but to the rendering persons prosperous, though wicked; afflicted, though righteous; and which is worse, to the rewarding some actions, though victous, and punishing other actions, though virtuous. But all this tannot drown the voice of nature in the conduct of Provi-

dence, plainly declaring itself for virtue, by way of distinction from vice, and preference to it. For our being so constituted as that virtue and vice are thus naturally favoured and discountenanced, rewarded and punished respectively as such, is an intuitive proof of the intent of Nature, that it should be so; otherwise the constitution of our mind, from which it thus immediately and directly proceeds, would be absurd. But it cannot be said, because virtuous actions are sometimes punished, and vicious actions rewarded, that Nature intended it. For, though this great disorder is brought about, as all actions are done, by means of some natural passion; yet this may be, as it undoubtedly is, brought about by the perversion of such passion, implanted in us for other, and those very good purposes. And indeed these other and good purposes, even of every passion, may be clearly seen.

We have then a declaration, in some degree of present effect, from Him who is supreme in nature, which side he is of, or what part he takes: a declaration for virtue, and

against vice.

Butler.

# EVENING.—MAY 22.

GOD INVOKED TO PERFECT HIS WORSHIPPERS.

Ah! how dismay'd the gardener sees
The lovely blossoms on his trees
By noxious worms annoy'd;
His fruits, maturing to the sight,
Despoil'd by some untimely blight,
And all his hopes destroy'd!

But when the favour'd plants appear In all the beauty of the year, He eyes the promised good; What transports in his bosom glow, To see the branches bending low, Beneath their prospering load!

Thus may my heavenly Gardener see
My faith still flourish like a tree
Beneath his skilful care:
Secure my boughs from cold and blight,
And view, well pleas'd and with delight,
Himself the fruit they bear.

Hast thou the gracious work begun. Then shine, thou all-prolific Sun, And cheer my drooping powers: Ah, save from the rude blast of sin, From every lurking foe within, That light and life devours.

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

HEAVEN AND ITS INHABITANTS. REVELATIONS VII.

9 I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and

about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our

God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the

throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;

neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

#### ENDLESS VARIETIES OF GLORY IN HEAVEN.

It often happens that the mind becomes too indifferent to the blessings which, by the bounty of the Eternal, we are permitted to know. The very abundance of his gifts renders us in many cases coldly unthankful. We read in scripture, "The sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose." A similar reflection may be made on the smiling glories of the year, which we now plentifully enjoy, and on most other gratifications known to man. They come and go, in never-ceasing change, and the admirable regularity of their return, frequently produces in our sluggish minds, listless indifference, if not weariness and satiety. The glorious songs from the throats of thousands of heaven-taught musicians, bursting from the forest; the bright verdure of spring, the fields and gardens covered with flowers, would momentarily afford far greater delight, had they not so repeatedly been heard and seen. So it is in many other cases. various domestic and social joys placed within our reach, would wake livelier transports than we commonly prove, if we had not already experienced them through many days. This is in part the cause of what is so constantly seen, that persons far advanced in life, experience comparatively little pleasure from intercourse with the world, far less than is known by the youth who is not tired of seeing and hearing its vanities.

In many situations in life this is felt; and not the least by the ministers of pleasure, whose business it is to provide the means for accelerating the flight of time, by giving him wings, not

They find that the most charming, the his own. most costly entertainments, lose their attraction with their novelty; they satiate the spectator, and leave the heart unsatisfied. Persons of opulence who see and visit more spectacles of popular attraction in a single day, than the poor can gain access to in a whole year, live too fast for the true enjoyment of the world, and are seen constantly restless, and hunted from their town palaces to their country seats; from the turf to the opera, and from their visits of state, to the prating of their servants. How exhausting to the spirits, how enfeebling to the mind is this! Solomon has given a lively picture of the vanities and of the continual and sickening sameness of all things under the sun. Many men feel this when dying; many having seen but fifty summers, are already old and weary of life.

Since such is the disappointing effect of those scenes the world calls enjoyment, it is impossible that we can have been created merely for this life on earth. Our souls, unsatisfied with all that it sees, all that it hears, still craves far more than the world can afford. Their condition while here, can only be that of their infancy. Seasons that resemble each other as closely as twin brothers can do, beautiful and superb as they may be, are still too deficient in variety to satisfy a spirit which feels that it is destined to ascend for evermore from one degree of knowledge and joy to another. We think, we work, we strive, and aspire to light and bliss; and while we seek to reach the summit of our hopes, sleep overcomes us, and we sink

All these circumstances clearly give evidence that we, as yet but imperfectly developed, are destined by our Maker to reach a nobler state of being. Not in vain, not in mockery have these ideas been given to us; and a day shall arrive when our best, most daring, hopes will be fully realized. That which our reason anticipates, our faith as Christians confirms. Faith not only tends to teach us virtue and wisdom, it also preaches to us that we are to enter on another life, where weariness will not be felt, where dull satiety must

back in helpless unconsciousness.

be unknown.

The thought is glorious! How happy are those favoured beings who, looking on the magnificent spectacle which this creation affords, can lift their thoughts to objects of higher importance, and see all heaven prepared for them. Raise, then, while here detained, immortal spirit, thy hopes, thy desires, to that which is thy true home. Penetrate

that murky veil—the darkness of night which now hides from the mortal eye the glory of an eternal spring, and ascend to the bright region, where thou shalt be for ever associated with new perfections from the hand of thy Omnipotent Lord, and delighted by the sight of innumerable worlds and scenes, most glorious and sublime.

Here, we wander among flowers which have been seen a thousand times; there, we shall be ever walking among new stars and worlds; here, are sights from hour to hour interfering with our evening devotions, and a sense of fatigue grows on beholding them; there, we shall be all life and all strength; for ever rejoicing in the goodness of the Eternal, and absorbed in rapturous admiration of the works of his mighty hand.

WORLDLY KNOWLEDGE, APART FROM RELIGION, DOES NOT ADVANCE MANKIND IN VIRTUE.

The most ancient civilized nation on record, the Egyptians, whose stupendous monuments of physical power and scientific skill are still the wonder of the world, were plunged in the basest and most degrading superstition, and burrowed deep, not only in idolatry, but in immorality. Their brightest intellectual era, I should say, as far as may be ascertained from sacred and profane history, was the blackest in their moral and religious character.

The Greeks, a far more interesting people, amid a blaze of intellectual splendour, were yet but a nation of refined sensualists, utterly regardless of those virtues on which the wellbeing of society principally depends. Their moral code was distinguished by the most deplorable defects, as their religious notions and institutions were disfigured by the wildest fan-

tasies and most absurd ceremonies.

Of the Romans we need only say, that those features of stern virtue and lofty dignity, of high probity and pure patriotism, which were her national characteristics and insignia during her political growth, in her earlier advances to universal empire, were directly discarded or defaced as soon as she became an intellectual people, and attained the summit of intellectual improvement. Her Augustan age, the age of genius, was also the age of the grossest crimes and the most general licentiousness. The same page of the historian which exhibits to our admiration a Virgil, a Tully, a Horace, a Macænas, a Lucan, and a Seneca, records the vile projects of a Cataline, the degrading excesses of a Clodius, the wild enormities of a Caligula, and the more than brutal cruelty, carnage, and carnality of a Nero.

The history of that remarkable nation, the Jews, will again furnish evidence of the same connexion. That precise period in their history most prominent in secular knowledge and sectarian theology, when their great historian, Josephus, and other writers flourished, was that precisely in which they appear the most finished and desperate in their depravity, and most signally evoked the fury and vengeance of heaven.

The general rule thus deduced from ancient history, that the moral improvement of mankind has not kept pace with their intellectual advancement, will be equally sustained by a critical survey of the ample volume of modern history. There may, indeed, appear some exceptions to the rule, but even these exceptions, probably, may be accounted for on other grounds than the alleged existence of any reflex intimacy and influence between secular knowledge and social, moral, and spiritual excellency and elevation. In such examples we shall discover, we think, that knowledge has proved safe and salutary, because virtue and piety have been more than ordinarily diffused and pre-eminent; knowledge, in such cases, never being the primary promoter and patron of virtue, but virtue the parent, preserver, and purifier of knowledge—its great controlling and conservative principle, by which its energies were wisely and happily governed and directed, and the springs of its prosperity kept clear of the feculence of stagnation and corruption.

Dr. Edwards

# MORNING.-MAY 23.

THE SAINTS' REST.

Lord, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known;
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art lov'd alone:—

A rest where all our soul's desire
Is fix'd on things above;
Where fear, and sin, and grief expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

O that I now the rest might know, Believe, and enter in! Now, Saviour, now the power bestow, And let me cease from sin.

Remove this hardness from my heart.
This unbelief remove;
To me the rest of faith impart,
The sabbath of thy love.

Come, O my Saviour, come away!
Into my soul descend!
No longer from thy creature stay
My Author, and my End!

The bliss thou hast for me prepared, No longer be delayed! Come, my exceeding great Reward, For whom I first was made.

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And seal me thine abode;
Let all I am in thee be lost;
Let all be lost in God.

Stebbing's Collection.

THE COMFORTER WILL NOT ABANDON HIS TRUE FOLLOWERS. JOHN XIV.

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?
6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the

life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it

sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the

works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in

me : or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I

do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 ¶ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

# DESPONDENCY OUGHT TO BE REPELLED BY THE CHRISTIAN AS SINFUL.

To avoid strife is not less the interest than the duty of the sincere worshipper of God. peace, and pursue it," is the wise counsel of the royal psalmist. The word, peace, would seem to signify that amiable concord in which we ought to desire to live with each other; but we may also find it in an important exhortation to strive most anxiously to secure that precious jewel, that good above all price, peace of mind. Where, where, are we to find this heavenly good, for which our hearts have already long sought and sighed in vain; where, in this life of care, distraction, and sorrow, is the matchless pearl to be discovered, amidst the shocks of fortune, and the mortifying disappointments to which we are incessantly exposed; amidst the pangs of blighted hopes and vain regrets of the best joys of life? That the world cannot give us this peace of mind, we are taught by painful experience, every day. He who wants, who sincerely covets to enjoy it, must seek it elsewhere; must apply for it to his Father who is in heaven.

Yes, it is so;-to our great Parent we must appeal. But how? How shall we proceed to win from his favour so mighty a boon? The greatest obstacle to our success is the doubt, the fear we prove, whether it will be ours to gain it from the love of our eternal Sire. But let us bear in mind the encouraging language of our Saviour. His words are, "Do not be afraid, only have faith;" and if we act according to this soulcalming admonition, the peace of God which passes all understanding, will become ours for ever. Fear is the enemy of man, which aims at cutting him off from that assistance which the Lord of all mercy, duly invoked, is ever ready to afford; but faith is the hand which boldly takes hold of it. Let us then not be afraid on account of our weakness, but "Believe that the Lord is always mighty in the weak and thou wilt feel very strong."

The consciousness of strength gives peace. We must not terrify ourselves with vain alarms; we must not live in constant fear of danger or misfortune, but teach our hearts to believe that, happen what may, all comes from the Lord. Happiness and misfortune, wealth and poverty, life and death, are severally sent by him, and feeling assured that he will not send more than we can bear, our hearts should ever remain at

peace

Nor let weak fears for what may befal us when the infirmities of age are felt, consume and embitter the days of our youth and vigour. To encourage the terrifying dread, that when we suffer from weakness, we shall want sustenance to comfort us in our declining years, would be to render the best part of our time miserable. It is the Lord who makes men rich and poor. He knows our wants before we can appeal to him to satisfy them, and his goodness is all-sufficient. Let us, satisfied of this, have faith in his kind providence, and our hearts will be at rest. We shall, our minds being properly regulated, feel a proper, cheering, and becoming confidence in God, even when we bend beneath the weight of accumulated years

Not only in life is there nothing which we should shrink from encountering, but even from death, the pious believer has nothing to fear. Shall we indulge the dreary thought, that by death the Creator will destroy and forsake us in the grave, and afford no comfort to those who survive us? Oh no! when removed from this transitory scene, we shall find that his mercy will be extended to ourselves and also to the dear

ones that in the course of nature we must leave behind. He will not forget the widow and the orphan, while we who on earth could find no resting place, shall learn with transport, that he has provided a blissful home for ourselves.

These things remembered, and cherished as they ought to be, that change which must come to all, will give us no agonising alarm, and the near view of the approaching angel of death, will not prevent our hearts from being at peace.

Do we say, that knowing no selfish cares, no degrading fears, we still sigh, lest, snatched away too early, while actively engaged in providing for the comfort of others, our removal will to them be the source of anguish and distress, and therefore tremble lest our time should come before we have set our house in order; before we have completed the task we had imposed upon ourselves, much good which we had proposed to effect, being left undone. Such cares are not for us. God knows his own designs, and our appointed time is the period at which it is most fitting we should depart. For others, as for ourselves, the sufferings in this state of being bear no comparison to the bright rewards which are in store for those who fear the Lord. Let us rest assured, that whatever he decrees is for the best, and we shall have peace.

So exercising our minds, we may look forward with ardent hope for the coming of our Redeemer. Then shall we see the triumphs of faith, when the dust of his servants is reanimated, and the terrors of the last enemy are swallowed up in victory. We may rationally long for the coming of that day, and our own consummation in joy; and so feeling, the cry of the Christian relieved from every uneasy thought, will be, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Taught wisdom by just reflection, we must learn to submit with meekness to that which God wills. Then shall we look to the dark future, not merely without trembling, but with lively hope. Happy those who, thus instructed, can feel themselves strangers to fear! Thrice happy those who, under all circumstances, stand fast in the faith! Their inheritance will be peace, even the peace of heaven. Strengthen, comfort thy servants, O Lord God of Israel! that while we live, this faith may be found in us.

#### GLORIOUS RESURRECTION FROM THE GRAVE.

As the roots even of our choicest flowers, when deposited in the ground, are rude and ungraceful; but when they spring up into blooming life, are most elegant and splendid: so the flesh of a saint, when committed to the dust, alas! what is it? A heap of corruption, a mass of putrefying clay. But when it obeys the great archangel's call, and starts into a new existence, what an astonishing change ensue! What a most ennobling improvement takes place!—That which was sown in weakness, is raised in all the vivacity of power. That which was sown in deformity, is raised in the bloom of celestial beauty. Exalted, refined, and glorified, it will shine "as the brightness of the firmament," when it darts the inimitable blue, through the fleeces—the snowy fleeces of some cleaving cloud.

Fear not, then, thou faithful Christian; fear not, at the appointed time, to descend into the tomb. Thy soul thou mayest trust with thy omnipotent Redeemer, who is Lord of the unseen world; "who has the keys of hell and of death." Most safely mayest thou trust thy better part in those beneficent hands, which were pierced with nails, and fastened to the ignominious tree for thy salvation. With regard to thy earthly tabernacle, be not dismayed. It is taken down, only to be rebuilt upon a diviner plan, and in a more heavenly form. If it retires into the shadow of death, and lies immured in the gloom of the grave, it is only to return from a short confinement to endless liberty. If it falls into dissolution, it is in order to rise more illustrious from its ruins, and wear an infinitely brighter face of perfection and of glory.

Having now made my panegyric, let me next take up a lamentation for these loveliest productions of the vegetable world.—For I foresee their approaching doom. Yet a little while, and all the sweets of the breathing, all the beauties of the blooming, spring, are no more. Every one of these amiable forms must be shrivelled to deformity, and trodden to the earth.—Significant resemblance this, of all created beauty. "All flesh is grass," like the green herbage, liable and prone to fade. Nay, all the goodliness thereof, its finest accomplishments, and what the world universally admires, is as the flower of the field; which loses its gloss, decays and perishes more speedily than the grass itself. -Behold then, ye brightest among the daughters of Eve, behold yourselves in this glass. See the charms of your person eclipsed by the lustre of these little flowers, and the frailty of your state represented by their transient glories. A fever may scorch those polished veins; a consumption may emaciate the dimpling cheeks; and a load of unexpected sorrows depress those lively spirits. Or should these disasters, in pity, spare the tender frame, yet age, inexorable age and wrinkles, will assuredly come at last; will wither all the fine features, and blast every sprightly grace.

Then, ye fair, when those sparkling eyes are darkened, and sink in their orbs; when they are rolling in agonies, or swimming in death, how will you sustain the affliction? how will you repair the loss!—Apply your thoughts to religion. Attend to the "one thing needful." Believe in, and imitate, the blessed Jesus. Then shall your souls mount up to the realms of happiness, when the well-proportioned clay is mingling with its mean original. The light of God's countenance will irradiate, with matchless and consummate perfection, all their exalted faculties. Cleansed entirely from every dreg of corruption, like some unsullied mirror, they will reflect the complete image of their Creator's holiness.—O! that you would thus dress your minds, and prepare for the immortal state! Then, from shining among your fellow-creatures on earth, you shall be translated to shine around

the throne of God—then, from being the sweeteners of our life, and the delight of our eyes here below, you shall pass by an easy transition into angels of light; and become "an everlasting excellency, the joy of all generations.

Hervey.

## EVENING .-- MAY 23.

MAN'S EXALTED HOPES.

Away, distrustful care!
I have thy promise, Lord,
To banish all despair,
I have thy oath and word.
And therefore I
Shall see thy face,
And there thy grace
Shall magnify.

Though sin and death conspire,
To rob thee of thy praise,
Still toward thee I'll aspire,
And thou dull hearts canst raise.
Open thy door;
And when grim death
Shall stop this breath,
I'll praise thee more.

With thy triumphant flock,
Then I shall number'd be,
Built on th' eternal rock,
His glory we shall see.
The Heavens so high
With praise shall ring,
And all shall sing
In harmony.

The sun is but a spark,
From the eternal light:
Its brightest beams are dark,
To that most glorious sight:
There the whole choir,
With one accord,
Shall praise the Lord
For evermore.

Baxter.

### THE SINNER'S APPEAL TO HIS MAKER. JOB X.

2 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

3 Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?
5 Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days.

6 That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

7 Thou knowest that I am not wicked: and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand,

8 Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about; yet thou dost destroy me

9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again? 10 Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me

like cheese.

11 Thou hast clothed with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.

12 Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visita-

tion hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with thee.

14 If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit

me from mine iniquity.

15 If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be rightcous, yet will I not fill up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction."

## VAST EXALTATION OF MAN ABOVE THE REST OF CREATION.

How admirable are the various parts of God's creation! In scripture we are told—"The bee is a small bird, and still prepares the sweetest fruit." With what astonishment do we behold the works of this little animal! Well may we gaze with holy wonder, when we note the mechanical instincts of the bee, as well as the powers given to other creatures to provide for their sustenance, and to defend themselves from danger. We are amazed at the contrivances by which they succeed in outwitting each other, but how high above them is man placed! How immeasurably superior does he find himself to every animal in existence, however great its ingenuity, however vast its strength! How are we exalted by a sense of our own might and dignity, when compared with any of them!

The movements of all other beings, are confined within the circumscribed limits originally assigned to them, while man, from age to age, continues to advance, labouring incessantly to gain new powers, and to approach perfection. They continue to build their nests, and to form their dens as they did in the days of Adam; but we have exchanged the caves and the grottos, for houses and palaces, and new discoveries are made every day in science, which facilitate our labours, and refine our enjoyments. The Creator has entrusted us with a mind, by the exertion of which, we are enabled to pass through the air, and over the sea, and to govern and change the face of the earth. Where water was before, we can make the dry land appear, and waters roll at our bidding, where till now, only dry land was seen. We are enabled to calculate the orbits of the moon, planets, and comets, to analyse the impalpable air, and determine its component parts, and even to guide the lightening in its course from the clouds above.

These astonishing powers conceded to us alone, prove the high dignity of man. He is possessed of knowledge, which God in his wisdom has denied to all other created beings. Ours is the awful prerogative to preside over the destructive elements; and even to regulate and appropriate them to our benefit. In perception and intelligence, how greatly is the most uncivilized barbarian, elevated above the cleverest ape, or the most sagacious monster of the forest!

Powers like those given to the human race, the All-wise could not entrust to unreasoning brutes. They would have employed them to no good purpose, but doubtless to their own injury, and to

mar the face of creation.

The soul of man exalted high, above the irrational animal, possesses that which is greater than scientific knowledge, the faculty of morality and religion. He is capable not only of astonishing exertions, but of anxiety for others, he can feel gentle love, and tender compassion. He is gifted with intelligence to look up to the Divine source of his own existence; the great architect of the universe. The ruthless cannibal, and the wildest, most untutored savage, have some consciousness. some idea of perfection, degraded as it may be by ignorance, and hateful superstition, of an invisible master, Creator and Preserver, whose benevolence he desires to conciliate, however strange and extravagant the means by which he seeks to accomplish this great end. The brute on the contrary, has no such lights, and feels and acts. but from sensual motives.

The dog distinguished for his quick intelligence from other beasts of the field, becomes warmly attached to his visible master; he defends his person, faithfully guards his property, and comprehends many of the commands addressed to him, but he is incapable of looking forward to his future fate, or of making any effort with a view to another life, in the hope of happiness after death. The powers and instincts of all animals, only attest the greatness of their Creator. They themselves have no continuity of thought. Their actions but resemble those of a child, before it is of sufficient age to reason, who, at his parents' bidding, will turn the key of a musical box, and produce sounds of harmony, without understanding how they are obtained.

Let not foolish pride exult that man is thus lifted above all the other inhabitants of the earth. It is not his own work, it is from the goodness of the Omnipotent that we stand in so distinguished a

position; it will not justify arrogance, but it should kindle gratitude. Our souls then shall praise the Lord that we are created in his own image, that we, dignified by the possession of reason, are permitted to use it in connection with free will. That our powers are so great, proves our destiny must be different from that of the brute creation. Let us then join with heart and voice to acknowledge the mighty boon with rational thankfulness. Be the reason we possess, steadily applied to honour the giver of all good, and to confess that his bounty provides for us with greater care than for the young ravens. Let us raise our eyes to heavenly objects, and not rest wholly mindful of the body's ease and welfare. The soul should be our chief care. Let pious thoughts, holy conversation, and humble supplication, be unceasingly used while we remain here, to secure its eternal happiness.

#### DUTIES OF RELIGION.

We are men, which is a mercy far above any temporal affliction that we can suffer. God might have made us worms instead of men, such despicable creatures as are below common notice. Whereas in being men, we are become Lords of heaven and earth, having an excellency above all other creatures that ever God made, excepting the angels. And is it not a shame for such an one, to be a slave to every slight trouble? that any light affliction, which is but for a moment, should make our souls which are immortal, to bow down under it? Should not the nobility of our natures advance us to a more generous temper, and make us erect and cheerful under such troubles? see how David was affected with this thought. "Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou visitest him?" 'Tis a mercy and a condescension to be admired, that God doth so much as take notice of us, though with his chastisements; and therefore ought not to be the ground of our complaint. He might suffer us to go on securely in our sins, without any restraint. We do not think ourselves concerned to take notice of every little fly or insect, or the poor worms under our feet. And therefore when he shall take such special care of us, as to restrain us in our wanderings, to administer physic to us in our diseases, we ought upon this account, rather humbly to thank and admire him, than to murmur against him.

Again, we are but men; creatures of a dependant being, not Lords of our own happiness. "And who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? how vile and despicable in comparison to him, and how unfit to judge of his ways? It is the common condition of humanity to be exposed to sufferings. "For man is born to troubles as the sparks fly upwards," that is, by a natural unavoidable necessity. And there is no temptation or trouble that befalls us, but what is common to men. We are born into, and must live in a trou-

blesome tumultuous world, where

Luctus, et ultrices posuere cubilia curæ, Pallentesq; habitant morbi; tristisq; senectus

Which is the proper place of grief, and care, and diseases, and the infirmities of age; and therefore we cannot expect a total exemption from these things. Omnia ista in longuevita

sunt, quomodo in longa via, et pluvis, et lutum, et pluvia. These things in a long life, are like dust, and dirt, and rain, in a long journey, which it were a vain thing for a man to think he could wholly avoid, but that he must sometime or other have his share of them. Now men usually vex and repine at that which is extraordinary and unusual, not at that which is general and common to all.

We are sinners, and so afflictions are our wages, our due; nd there is no reasonable man that will repine at just and equal dealing: there is a special emphasis to this purpose in the very phrase of that text forecited-"A man for the punishment of his sins," implying, that if he be but a man, if he have but rational principles, he must needs acknowledge

the equity of being punished for sin.

Bishop of Chester (1683).

## MORNING.—MAY

THE SOUL'S ASPIRING.

Deathless principle, arise! Soar, thou native of the skies! Pearl of price by Jesus bought, To his glorious likeness wrought, Go, to shine before his throne, Deck his mediatorial crown; Go, his triumphs to adorn, Made for God, to God return.

Lo, he beckons from on high! Fearless to his presence fly; Thine the merit of his blood, Thine the righteousness of God! Angels, joyful to attend, Hovering round thy pillow bend; Wait to catch the signal given. And escort thee quick to heaven!

Is thy earthly house distrest? Willing to retain its guest? 'Tis not thou, but it, must die-Fly, celestial tenant, fly ! Burst thy shackles, drop thy clay, Sweetly breathe thyself away. Singing, to thy crown remove, Swift of wing, and fired with love

Toplady:

THE CHRISTIAN, IN HIS MOST TRYING MOMENTS, MAY LOOK FOR AID FROM ABOVE. LUKE XII.

1 In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon other, he began to say unto his disciples first of all. Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed;

neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house tops.

4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one

of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many spar-

- 8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.
- 9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.
- 10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say :

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

#### THE BLISSFUL PROSPECTS AND LIVELY HOPES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

It is good to be sensible of our weak and dependant state, and to be perfectly aware that a very trivial accident will suffice to disable us, or even to produce death. We are but as shadows. "Man is like to vanity," says the Psalmist, and many sages of antiquity concur in proclaiming the same humiliating truth. Of the helplessness of mortals, and of the imperfect character of this state of being, new proofs are afforded by each passing day. They frequently cause us to experience alarm, and are felt as a heavy weight upon the soul. We sigh in unaffected sorrow when we behold suffering, which we would fain lend a helping hand to mitigate, but discover we want the power to do it. But this may be for our good. Our very helplessness may render us objects of the love and mercy of God, and secure us the protection of his wise providence. Our faith in, and our joyous conviction that, a new life is in reserve for us, is strengthened from day to day, by the feeling that grows upon this thought. The hope gains fresh vigour; and what a privilege it is that we are under the guidance of an Almighty Parent, and that "his visitation preserveth our spirits!" This privilege which we owe to our very indigence, is a great compensation for all the wants of which we may complain. It indemnifies us for the weakness, evils, toils and cares of nature. Let us then never again utter a complaint that the Lord has ordained "man like to vanity."

Should the recollection of our weakness predo-

minate so far, and threaten to betray us into unreasonable pusillanimity; should it lead us to brood gloomily over the future, and thus prove the foe of our peace, we will then hasten for relief to prostrate ourselves before the throne of our eternal Maker. By lifting our thoughts to him, we shall gain composure, and instead of wasting our hours in vain lamentings, faithfully apply our limited powers to aid our suffering brethren; and the will being regarded by our Lord rather than the deed, we shall thus promote our own welfare.

Those who are now depressed, God will revive at a proper season. He will scatter the clouds which we sorrowfully behold hanging over our destiny, and speak comfort to our souls. He will not forget his gracious promise to his ancient chosen people, the Jews, that the dry bones should live, and the anointing spirit of the Most High, be again breathed upon them. This being fully proved to us, we despond no more, but look forward with glad, yet awful expectation, for the coming of that day, when ransomed multitudes of every kindred, nation and tongue, shall be gathered together unto the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Looking up to our glorious Father, our thoughts dwell on eternity, where our present weakness will give way to undying glory, and where the soul, being in a perfect state, can no longer have to regret that "Man is like to vanity."

Such is our future destination; such the lot faith teaches, will be ours. There, our meanness and incapacity will be known no more; and we shall not have to reply to fellow creatures craving our assistance, that to give it is out of our power. No difficulty will present itself which we cannot overcome; no beneficent work contemplated which we are unable to execute.

Though our powers must be limited while we remain here in the flesh, we will not be disheartened by the knowledge that such is our condition. On the contrary, it shall move us to cling more closely to the mighty power, which can alone give us peace in this state of existence, and guide us to salvation in the world to come. We will endeavour so to conduct ourselves as to win his favour and support. That will secure us against all want of assistance, and we shall rest in blessed hope, knowing that he will enable "this corruptible to put on incorruptible," Our grief we banish; we cease to complain, and join to sing with a joyful voice, thou, Oh God art our trust and our hope!

#### MERCY GRACIOUSLY OFFERED TO ALL.

Turn and live is as certain a truth as turn or die. Sinners, there are none of you shall have cause to go home, and say I preach despair to you. Are we used to shut up the door of mercy against you? O that you would not shut it up against yourselves! Are we used to tell you that God will have no mercy on you, though you turn? When did you hear a preacher say such a word? You that bark at the preachers of the gospel for desiring to keep you out of hell, and say that they preach despair; tell me, when did you ever hear any sober man say, that there is no hope for you, though you repent and be converted? No, it is quite the contrary which we daily proclaim from the Lord, that whosoever is born again shall be saved: so far are we from persuading you to despair of this, that we persuade you not to make any doubt of it. It is life, and not death, which is the first part of our message to you; our commission is to offer salvation - a speedy, glorious, everlasting salvation to every one of you; to the poorest beggar, as well as the greatest lord; to the worst of you, drunkards, swearers, thieves, yea, to the despisers and reproachers of the holy way of salvation: we are commanded by the Lord our Master to offer you a pardon for all that is past, if you will now at last return and live; we are commanded to be seech and entreat you to accept the offer, and to tell you what preparation is made by Christ, what mercy stays for you; what patience waiteth on you; what thoughts of kindness God has towards you; and how happy, how certainly and unspeakably happy, you may be if you will. We have indeed also a message of wrath and death: yea, of a two-fold wrath and death; but neither of them is our principal message. We must tell you of the wrath that is on you already, and the death that you are born under; but this is only to show you the need of mercy. For who will seek out for physic, that, knows not he is sick? Our telling you of your misery, is not that which makes you miserable, but that which drives you to seek for mercy. It is you that have brought this death upon yourselves. We tell you also of another death, and much greater torment, which will fall on those who will not be converted. But as this is true, so it is but the last and saddest part of our message. We are first to offer you mercy, if you will turn; and it is only those that will not turn, nor hear the voice of mercy, to whom we must foretel damnation. If you will not cast away your transgressions, and come away at the call of Christ, and be converted, we have not a word of damning wrath, or death to speak against you. I do here, in the name of the Lord of life, proclaim to you all, to the worst of you, to the greatest, to the oldest sinner, that you may have mercy and salvation, if you will but turn. There is mercy in God; there is sufficiency in the satisfaction of Christ; the promise is free and full, and universal; you may have life, if you will but turn. But, then, as you love your souls, remember what turning it is which the scripture speaks of. It is not to mend the old house, but to pull down all, and build anew, on Christ, the rock and sure foundation.

Yourselves are witnesses now, that it is salvation and not damnation which is the great doctrine I preach to you, and the first part of my message to you. Accept of this, and we shall go no farther; for we would not trouble you with the name of damnation without necessity.

But if you will not he saved, there is no remedy, but damnation must take place: for there is no middle place between the two: you must have either life or death.

And we are not only to offer you life, but to show you the grounds on which we do it, and call you to believe that God does mean, indeed, as he speaks; that the promise is true, and extends conditionally to you as well as others.—Baxter.

## EVENING .-- MAY 24.

INFINITE GOODNESS DELIGHTS TO FORGIVE.

O Thou unknown, Almighty cause Of all my hope and fear! In whose dread presence, ere an hour, Perhaps I must appear!

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun;
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done;

Thou know'st that thou hast formed me With passions wild and strong; And listening to their witching voice Has often led me wrong

Where human weakness has come short, Or frailty stept aside, Do thou, All-Good: for such thou art, In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have erred, No other plea I have, But, Thou art good: and goodness still Delighteth to forgive.

Burns.

THE TRANSGRESSOR WHO TURNS TO GOD WILL FIND MERCY. JOEL II.

1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand.

2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall

escape them.

4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses;

and as horsemen, so shall they run.

5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

6 Before their face the people shall be much pained: all

faces shall gather blackness.

7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they

shall not be wounded.

9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

10 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall

tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

11 And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

12 ¶ Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping,

and with mourning.

13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

GOD WILL NOT LONG AVERT HIS COUNTENANCE FROM THE REPENTANT SINNER.

That God may show us the light of his countenance, is the prayer of the sincere Christian. Their situation is calamitous of whom the Lord says, "I will shew them the back, and not the face." This was uttered by the Lord, in reference to his chosen, but rebellious people. We have sometimes to regret, that to us his back has appeared to be turned; but we have cause to rejoice, that it has been but for a short season, and that we might know more exquisite delight when he again turned to us his face. Smiling May, which by his goodness we are permitted again to behold, is to our eyes the more beautiful, from being preceded by the dreary inclemency of the winter months. Uninterrupted health through fourscore years, and the constant possession of wealth, honour, and friendship, would eventually prove wearisome, and possibly cause the ruin of our souls. The verdant meadow on which we now gaze with delight, cannot yield its expected fruit under incessant sunshine; and, in like manner, human welfare and perfection, cannot be the result of uninterrupted enjoyment. Placed in such a seemingly happy condition, the soul would lose its best energies, and its present elasticity would be no more. Tempests are required, to expel corruption and disease, as well as to strengthen the roots of the forest trees; and so, to the formation of good and great men, severe trials are necessary. The hero must not fear the weather, nor must the Christian shrink from bearing the cross.

It betrays a childish want of reason, and a foolish heart, if we always desire to laugh and be merry. Be it ours to seek the merciful aid of our Creator and our God! and this we must accustom ourselves to solicit, with pious confidence, in the dark season of adversity. Not yet have

we reached that world in which its denizens can look for the brightness of an eternal spring. Here, our very formation, admirable as it is, but carrying within it the seeds of destruction, forbids us to

hope for perfect happiness.

It is not for us to complain, O gracious Father! if to us thy back is sometimes shewn. We know thou regardest us with a watchful care, which it will never be in our power adequately to acknowledge; and certain we are, that thy indulgent love would spare us the days of December, as well as those visitations of poverty, sickness, and varieties of suffering, which we have been fated occasionally to know, if they were not for our good. It is because thou lovest, that on us falls thy chastising hand. Deeply we may regret, that much more frequently than thou punishest, we, by our misconduct, bring pain and disappointment on ourselves. We cause our own sufferings, Lord of all mercy! by sinfully forgetting to strengthen our confidence in thee, and neglecting to obey thy commandments. Then it is, when our misdeeds have given just offence to thy glorious Majesty, that thou turnest thy back upon us.

Fools that we have been, to complain of ailments of the body, of pecuniary losses, and of the wounds we may from time to time have received, in striving against sinners and against sin! Our complaints are as vain and irrational as those of a child, who, in headstrong folly, pursues his way, though often cautioned, and in consequence, eventually stumbles and falls. Wisely and graciously thou hast brought within the compass of our observation, admonishing examples on every side, which serve to shew the light of thy sacred word. That meets us everywhere; and, thus instructed, it is our own fault if we are not more virtuous, more wise, and more happy than we are. We have but sincerely and resolutely to will it, and we shall be so.

Since this is plain to our understanding, we will not presume to complain, O Lord! if, defective as we know ourselves to be, thou art sometimes pleased to "shew us thy back," instead of thy face, but comforted and gladdened by thy favour and assistance, whenever thy hand is extended for our relief, we will rise with renewed hope and courage, though it has been thy pleasure to suffer us to stumble and fall. Not long, if truly repentant, will such mishaps be ours; not long will our dejection continue; but the period of its duration may be seriously extended, from our sinful obstinacy, impatience, and disobedience.

But our mortal day hastens to its close. Vain apprehensions we desire to put away, that pious hope may prevail. It may be, that the great Jehovah has sent forth his mandate that we shall be called from earth to his presence. Soon, from his abounding mercy, our souls, liberated from earthly shackles, may exult in having to look on the brightness of an eternal spring. How chilling and sad is even the charming aspect of an earthly May, compared with the glories which await the children of God, above the sky.

#### THE BLESSINGS ATTENDANT UPON A RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Religion tends to the ease and pleasure, the peace and tranquillity of our minds; wherein happiness chiefly consists, and which all the wisdom and philosophy of the world did always aim at, as the utmost felicity of this life. And that this is the natural fruit of a religious and virtuous course of life, the scripture declares to us in these texts: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;" "Great peace have all they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them;" "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace;" "The fruit of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever;" the plain sense of which is, that pleasure and peace do naturally result from a holy and good life. When a man hath once engaged himself in a religious course, and is habituated to piety and holiness, all the exercises of religion and devotion, all acts of goodness and virtue are delightful to him. To honour and worship God, to pray to him, to study his will, to meditate upon him and to love him, all these bring great pleasure and peace along with them. What greater contentment and satisfaction can there be to the mind of man, when it is once purified and refined from the dregs of sensual pleasures and delights, and raised to its true height and pitch, than to contemplate and admire the infinite excellencies and perfections of God, to adore his greatness and to love his goodness?

Tillotson.

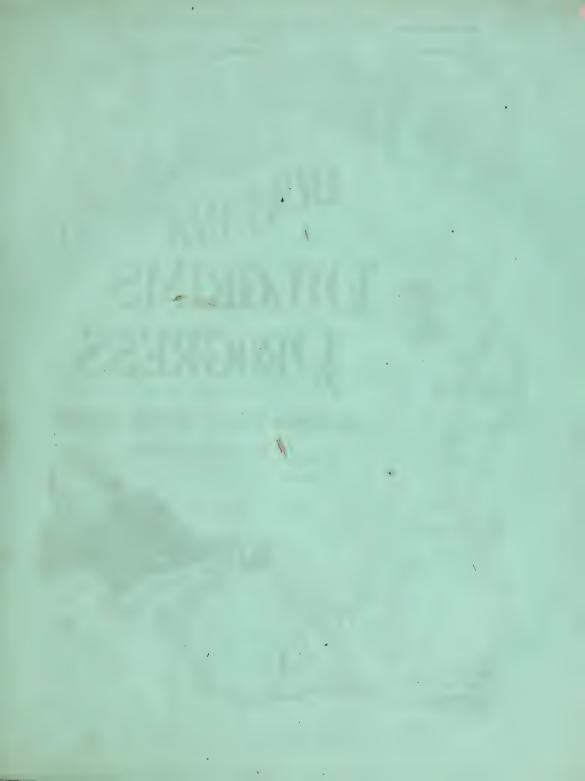
## MORNING.—MAY 25.

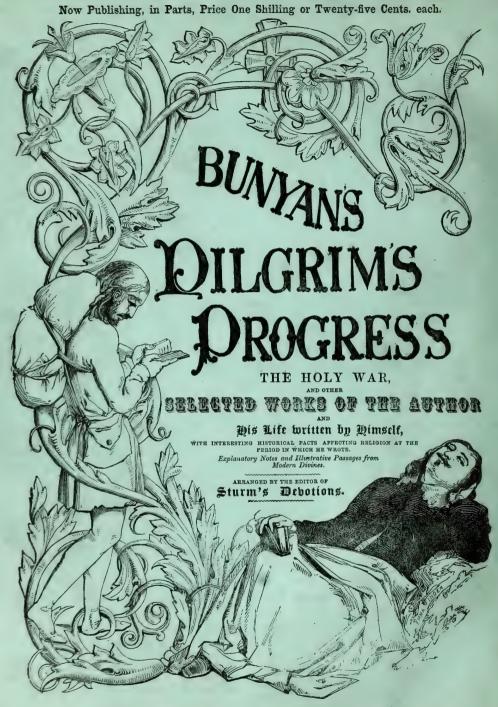
GLORY IN THE CROSS.

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

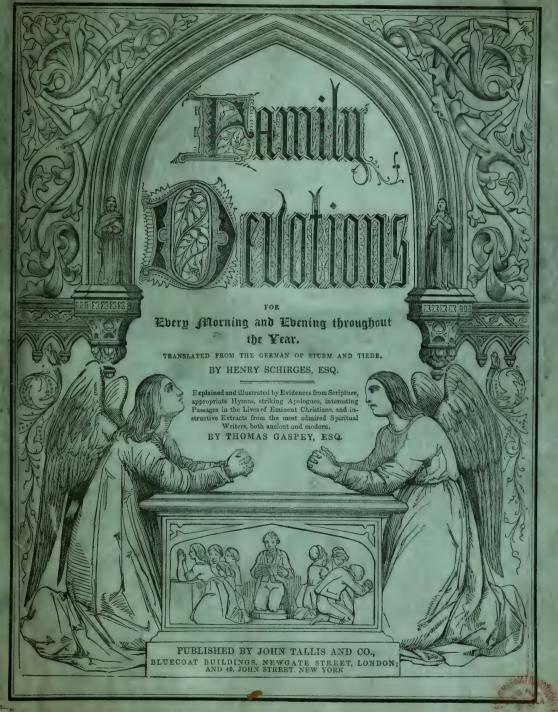
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God; All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice them to his blood.

His dying crimson, like a robe, Spreads o'er his body on the tree; Then I am dead to all the globe, And all the globe is dead to me.



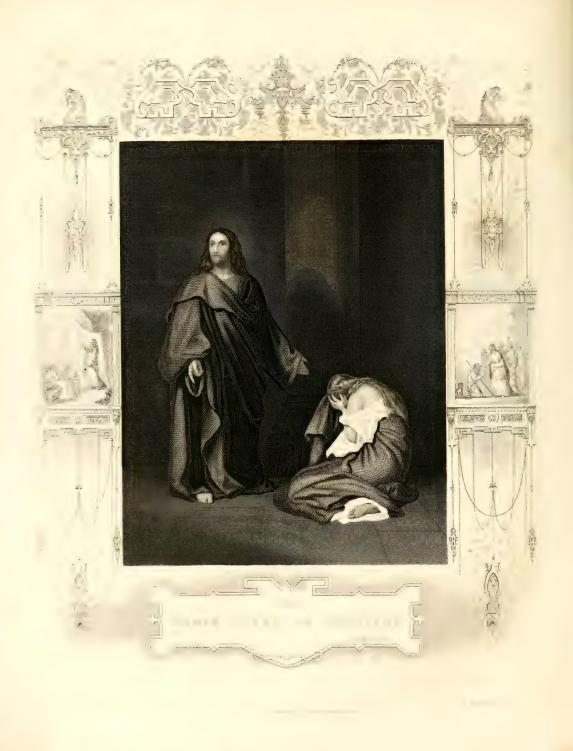


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live to complete our eightieth year? That question is of vast importance. What, at the close of that period, will be the course of our thoughts, the nature of our occupations, and what the character and condition of the friends who may have us in their keeping, may also claim grave consideration. But if these are matters of serious moment, how much more important the question, "What will be our prospect in the world to come? How shall we stand before our God, and before our Mediator, Jesus?" The month on which we now enter, if wisely employed, may enable us to give a satisfactory answer to these enquiries, if its days are resolutely given to holy thoughts, and devotional exercises; if the work of our spiritual improvement be steadily carried forward; our hopes elevated above this world, and our conversations of heaven.

#### THE PATRIARCH'S HAPPINESS.

When our favourite schemes are suddenly blasted, and one disappointment follows upon another, we are all forward to conclude, as Jacob did, "All these things are against me." Alas! how great is our blindness! How extreme our perverseness! Who are we, that we should undertake to decide upon the judgments of God? Would we take the reins of government out of his hands? Let us be willing, that he shall have the entire disposal of us; and, if indeed we are persuaded of his wisdom, love, and faithfulness, let us rest assured, without enquiring a reason for his conduct, that "He hath done all things well;" and let us patiently wait for an explanation, till the end come. "What he does, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

We hasten to the close of Jacob's life, when the prospect cleared up, and brighter days were reserved for him. His children returned, and brought him tidings, that Joseph, his long-lost son, was still living, that he presided as Governor over the land of Egypt, and had sent for him and for all his household, to nourish and protect them in the time of famine. The effect of this account upon Jacob's mind was such as we might have expected. He was overpowered by it: he knew not how to credit it. "His heart fainted; for he believed them not." But at length the evidence was so strong, that his doubts and fears were all dispersed. "His spirit revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

We are now therefore to accompany him in his last remove, from Canaan to Egypt; a formidable journey, to one so far advanced in life. But he has an infallible Guide, an Almighty Protector; and in dependance upon him, the patriarch set forward with all his offspring, and with all his substance. When he came to Beersheba (the place where his father Isaac had dwelt, and had been favoured with the revelations of God), he halted, in order that he might acknowledge his firm trust and confidence in the God whom Isaac had worshipped there, and seek his direction and support in this most important change of situation. Possibly the thought might arise in his mind, "I may be counteracting the design of God, in thus transplanting myself and my whole family from the very land, which he hath promised to give us." But in answer to

his prayer, the Lord God appeared, and comforted him with the assurance, that he himself would go down with him into Egypt, there multiply his posterity, and in due time bring them up again to Canaan. This was enough.—And are not we hereby instructed and encouraged to worship the Lord, and ask his guidance and protection, in the way by which we go? "He is faithful who hath promised," and "He hath not said unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." While his people make known their fears and their distresses to him, he will not fail to give them fresh intimations of his favour.

The desire of Jacob's heart was gratified. He was preserved through his journey, and permitted to see his beloved Joseph again. What an affecting scene is exhibited before us, while we behold the mutual embraces of the father and the son! It were difficult to say, whether the dutifulness of the one, or the love of the other, exceeded. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and presented himself unto him: and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive!"

Robinson

## MORNING.-JUNE 2.

GOD STRENGTHENS HIS WORSHIPPILE.

Wait, my soul, upon the Lord,
To his gracious promise flee,
Laying hold upon his word,
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

If the sorrows of my cas Seem peculiar to me; God has promised needful grace, "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Days of trial, days of grief, In succession I may see; Daily, this is my relief, "As thy days thy strength shall be."

When I feel my want of strength,
Who, my soul, so weak as thee.
Christ shall give thee power at length,
"As thy days thy strength shall be."

Rock of ages, I'm secure,
With thy promise full and free;
Faithful, positive, and sure,
"As thy days, thy strength shall be."

Gems of Sacred Poetry.

GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN SEEN FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY GHOST. I. COR. II.

9 Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, and not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he him-

self is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

### ALL THE PHENOMENA OF NATURE PROVE GOD'S CARE FOR MAN.

We would fain adore the Lord, and magnify his name; but how shall we worthily honour him? "The Lord is inexpressibly great, and his might is marvellous," we read in the sacred volume, and loudly is the truth proclaimed, by the whole history of the world, as well as by the particular experience of every individual in it. Strongly are we prompted to acknowledge this, by the beauty and glory of nature, when she has assumed her gorgeous summer garments. Then it is, we feel spontaneously moved to raise our voices to sound our great Creator's praise. He has provided, in her varied charms, profusely, everything that can comfort and rejoice man, and elevate his soul; and Oh! how pure, how holy, and how exhibitanting are the pleasures which the meditative mind derives from Nature! Other enjoyments are easily vitiated, are often converted into sources of bitter anguish, and besides, demand great preparation, and frequently occasion considerable expense, while these, perfect and unalloyed as they are, we find open to gratify the children of men, without labour and without cost. We cannot be prevented from enjoying them. Nobody can destroy them, or withdraw them from our view. They are securely ours, if we preserve but a proper frame of mind, to dwell on them as we ought, and on the bounty of their immortal Author. Great is the pleasure they afford at the moment, and its after effects are not less delightful and beneficial. It cheers the mind which worldly cares have fatigued, as the gentle dews of heaven refresh the drooping plant. We feel our strength renewed, and revive from exhaustion; we are comforted and exhilarated, after being depressed by grief. Hope revisits the bosom which it had deserted, and we no longer timidly shrink within ourselves, believing that we are utterly forsaken by the Lord. Those only who enjoy the comforts offered by Nature, with the Lord in their hearts, can know this blissful experience.

Never, never may we walk in the magnificent temple of Nature, without remembering the mighty Author of all we behold with admiration, gratitude, and love, nor without resolving to devote to him our hearts and our lives. Rationally, we cannot withhold such a tribute from the allbounteous Deity, who has arranged the world in such marvellous beauty, and endowed it with such vast and boundless riches, for the sake of man. He gives the verdant grass, and opens the buds of the flowers, that we may enjoy their charms. It is his hand that brings forth bread from the earth, and fills the land with fruit. He creates all we see; he waters the lands from his chambers, that we may be satisfied.

How can reflecting man refuse to be wholly his, whose benevolence is such, that it is in proof he has care even for the worm in the dust; that he nourishes the birds of the air, protects the fragile flower, and sends benefits and blessings, in the awful thunder storm; thus speaking, even from the clouds, to the hearts of his worshippers, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." For us, the earth is full of his riches. Our hearts, therefore, shall ever confide in him.

To man, the heavens declare his glory; our mouths, therefore, shall not be dumb, nor backward to speak of the goodness and grandeur of the architect of the world.

Our souls shall bless the Lord, and not forget the long succession of benefits which we have to acknowledge, even in those moments when terrible devastations may render the bosom of Nature desolate, or when it refuses to furnish its wonted gifts, or when its phenomena prepare and threaten toil and danger, even for the rest of our lives.

When many happy days shall have run their course, and evil ones succeed, when years of sorrow overtake us, we will not forget the manifold blessings we have shared, overwhelmed as we may be by burthens, mortifications, and afflictions, which seem almost too heavy to be borne. Oh no! even then, we will not despond. We will still feel, eternal Father! that the bright and glorious summer, and the delights it brings, are testimonies of thy love. Thine, under all circumstances, we will ever remain; thine we will still proclaim ourselves, in prosperity or adversity, in weal or woe; thine, ever thine, we hope to be found, and all our trust is in thee, O Lord!

## GOD ORDAINS HIS CHILDREN TO KNOW SEVERE TRIALS.

Isaac was a man of trouble, though under the immediate care of heaven. In order to preserve life, it became necessary for him to remove from Canaan, which was visited with a grievous famine; and, by the divine instruction, he took up his abode among the Philistines. Do we wonder, that he, "to whom the promises were made," should be reduced to difficulties in procuring sustenance for the body? Is not this a common case? Are not many of those, who are dearest to God, poor and afflicted, and some, perhaps, in fear of perishing by hunger? An infallible assurance, indeed, is given them, that "they shall not want any manner of thing that is good." But their faith may be sorely tried; and, for that very end, they may be brought to such extremities, as to prove that they are willing to suffer, and resign their all to God. May we be emboldened to cast our care upon God, from the instance before us!

Isaac was compelled to sojourn amongst a strange people. But, in the country of Philistia, the presence and blessing of God were manifestly with him. The Lord himself appeared to him, to encourage his hope of protection and support from heaven, and to confirm the covenant with him, as he had done with Abraham, whereby the patriarch was taught to expect the possession of the promised land, a numerous progeny, and one seed in particular, "in whom all nations should be blessed." Are we not ready to say, If this God be our God, what have we to fear? If he will be with us to bless us, we need not dread, either a famine or the opposition of

Philistines.

But did not Isaac's faith stagger? Alas! where shall we find an example of one, who has discovered no marks of unbelief? We perceive some grievous signs of human depravity, even in this eminent saint: and, what is remarkable, he fell into the very same sin, which brought so foul a stain upon his father Abraham's reputation. He was guilty of a mean and base equivocation concerning his wife, representing her as his sister; and into that poor subterfuge he was betrayed by a very dishonourable suspicion of the Philistines, and a cowardly apprehension of losing his life: "Lest," said he, "they should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon." In this conduct we might point out many things wrong and inconsistent with his general character. The solemn declaration of God, that he would be with him and bless him, should have inspired him with greater courage, and preserved him in a more steadfast and entire dependance. But alas! both precepts and promises, of themselves, are neffectual to restrain the corruptions of the heart. It pleases God to leave his people, at times, to a very painful experience of their own sinfulness, to teach them the continual need they have of his pardoning and sanctifying grace. May we ever remember where our security is!

Robinson.

## EVENING.—JUNE 2.

THE SINNER'S ONLY HOPE.

Father, God, who seest in me Only sin and misery, See thine own anointed One, Look on thy beloved Son!

Turn from me thy glorious eyes, To that bloody sacrifice, To that full atonement made, To that utmost ransom paid.

Hear his blood's prevailing cry; Let thy bowels then reply: Then through him the sinner see; Then in Jesus look on me

Golden Treasury.

#### WEAKNESS AND INIQUITY OF THEM. PSALM XXXVI.

1 The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his

iniquity be found to be hateful.

3 The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath

left off to be wise, and to do good.

4 He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself

in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.

5 Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithful-

ness reacheth unto the clouds.

6 Thy righteousness is like great mountains; thy judgments

are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.
7 How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore
the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy

8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall

we see light.

10 O continue thy loving kindness unto them that know

thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not

the hand of the wicked remove me.

### MAN'S FORGETFULNESS AND PRESUMPTION.

Man is weak—is incredulous. He made not himself, and of that he is perfectly aware, but still he seems to doubt if he had a Creator. "What is the Almighty that we should serve him," is the cry of the wicked; but it could hardly be supposed that, in the overflow of his pride, a thinking man could thus, on deliberation, speak. Every passing moment serves to remind him of his own insignificance, without aid from above. The scripture and his own thoughts combine to satisfy him, that angels and men have both rebelled against

their Sovereign, the Lord of glory, and met with the punishment due to their guilty presumption. Yet, notwithstanding the frequent speaking examples of the awful effects of sinful disobedience, those are still found who seem to say by their actions, if not by their lips. "What is the Lord that we should serve him?" or "What do we profit by calling upon his name?"

In all conditions of life, men are prone to wilfulness, and culpably neglectful of duty. In health their reckless folly seems to bid defiance to him from whom it proceeds—on the sick bed they pusillanimously tremble-if poor, they think but of gaining bread; and if found in affluence, they are ashamed to pray. Few there are, who seek the Lord with holy confidence and pious meekness

in their hearts.

The arrogant folly of men causes them to receive the gifts of God with indifference. satisfied with the blessings of health, abundant supplies of food and clothing, they crave to accumulate goods which they may squander, as children seek to force from their parents, by tears and uplifted hands, the gift of glittering toys, which obtained, they presently throw away with

scorn and disgust.

Oh God! how unworthily does that animated dust, which thou hast been pleased to endow with life and consciousness in our persons, walk before thee. While worlds, and suns, and angels, and blessed spirits, are offering hymns of praise before thy throne, men weakly speculate on making thy bounty the servant of their low desires. presuming sinner expects his wishes to be immediately fulfilled; expects that the Creator should obey the creature, and mournfully deluded, madly undervalues what thou hast been pleased to grant. "Poor helpless fool! The whole order of the universe ought to teach the greatness and grandeur of your God, and your own nothingness. Bitter care, depressing and incessantly recurring wants, and other salutary chastisements, are all insufficient to teach you what you are, and to make you duly humble yourselves before the Majesty of heaven. Painful as they are; knowing your own perverseness, you ought to solicit the Eternal to grant visitations which may correct your depravity.

How often do the sons of men fall to ruin from their own vain pride, and vile ingratitude. Not even the weather as arranged by the Lord of all, can satisfy the demands of man. Does infinite wisdom give sunshine, he calls for rain, and this

denied, he sighs, and almost abandons himself to despair. The sinner wishes for a world different from this, to suit his immediate views; he claims that he may be great and rich, and that others should become his slaves; and men as well as animals, that come in his way, he wishes to see swept from existence. Sometimes offended with the sun or the moon, and at others displeased with himself, he is still the repining dupe of his

own evil disposition.

But human arrogance proceeds still further, and dares to despise the means of salvation, conceded by infinite mercy, to a guilty world. If, however, the All-wise had appointed that salvation should come by a different course; had he even condescended to command Jesus Christ to appear every year on earth, possessing earthly power and superhuman wisdom, still would man complain; still would his weak and wicked heart be found dissatisfied. The presuming, murmuring transgressor, approves only of what he himself devises, frequently as what he heretofore prepared, became a mockery and a scourge. Yet, forsooth, the Eternal is to be tutored and guided by those he has called into being, though such their ob vious folly, that two of them scarcely agree on

all points, as to what they want!

Oh! thou, long-enduring and omnipotent Jehovah! with humble contrition we confess, that we have unhappily been of the number of those who have madly and thanklessly withheld the adoration and worship, due to thy grace, because it has not been thy pleasure to grant what we have learned to covet. We own thy loving kindness has been great, or we must have been annihilated by thy wrath. Death and everlasting ruin must have fallen on us but for thy compassion. Thy hand was in mercy extended to us, even while we neglected to look up to thee for favour and support. Thou hast watched over us wandering in the paths of sin. We feel with sorrow our own unworthiness; we own ourselves unworthy of the host of thy favours, we are unworthy to be called thy children. Yet, notwithstanding our numerous backslidings, thine we are still, through the merits of our glorious Redeemer. Dearly hast thou loved us. Wonderfully hast thou spared Oh! grant us such enlargement of mind that we may no longer be forgetful of our true interest, and unmindful of our duty; and that eventually we may reform, and become, in some degree, worthy of that vast unfailing bounty, of which we know ourselves the object.

#### THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF FERVENT PRAYER.

Among the numerous topics for prayer, there is one which, being of universal interest, ought not to be omitted. For by whatever dissimilarity of character, capacity, profession, station, or temper, the condition of man, and, of course, the nature of prayer, is diversified; there is one grand point of union, one circumstance, one condition, in which they must all meet; one state of which every man is equally certain; one event which happeneth to all,—"It is appointed unto every man once to die." The rugged road of sorrow, the flowery path of pleasure, as well as

#### "The paths of glory, lead but to the grave."

In praying, therefore, against the fear of death, we do not pray against a contingent but a certain evil; we pray to be delivered from the overwhelming dread of that house which is appointed for all living; we are put in mind that all who are born must die!

"The end of all things is at hand." To what purpose does the Apostle convert this awful proclamation? Does he use it to encourage gloomy tempers, to invite to unprofitable melancholy? No: he uses the solemn admonition to stir us up to moral goodness,—therefore, "be sober;"—he does more, he uses it to excite us to religious vigilance.—and "Watch unto prayer."

Prayer against the fear of death, by keeping up in us a constant remembrance of our mortality, will help to wean us from a too intimate attachment to the things we are so soon to quit. By this habitual preparation to meet our Judge, we shall be brought to pray more earnestly for an interest in the great Intercessor, and to strive more effectually against every offence which may aggravate the awfulness of that meeting.

Fervent prayer that Divine grace may prepare us for death, will, if cordially adopted, answer many great moral purposes. It will remind every individual of every class that "the time is short;"-that "there is no repentance in the grave."

Perhaps even the worldly and thoughtless man, under an occasional fit of dejection, or an accidental disappointment, may be brought to say, "When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God." Oh, think upon him now, call upon him, now now, when you are in prosperity: now, when your fortunes are flourishing; now, when your hill is so strong that you think it shall never be removed: think upon him, call upon him, when the scene is the brightest, when the world courts, flatteries invite, and pleasures betray you; think on him, while you are able to think at all, while you possess the capacity of thinking. The time may come, when "He may turn his face from you, and you will be troubled." Think of God, when the alluring images of pleasure and of profit would seduce you from him. Prosperity is the season of peculiar peril. "It is the bright day that brings forth the adder." Think of God when the tempting world says, "All this will I give thee." Trust not the insolvent world; it has cheated every creditor that ever trusted it. It will cheat you.

To the man of opulence, who heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them, prayer will be a constant memento; it will remind him that he walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain; it will remind him of laying up treasures where thieves cannot enter, nor rust corrode,

The habit of praying against the fear of death would check the pride of the youthful beauty, by reminding her how soon she must say to the worm, Thou art my father; and to corruption, Thou art my mother and my sister.

MORNING.—JUNE 3.

#### ALL MORTAL WOES ARE SEEN BY THE ETERNAL.

O Lord, whate'er is felt or fear'd. This thought is my repose, That he, my mortal frame who rear'd. Its various weakness knows.

Thou viewest us with a pitying eye, While struggling with our load: In pains and dangers thou art nigh. Our Father, and our God.

Supported by thy changeless love, We tend to realms of peace: Where every sorrow shall remove. And every sin shall cease.

The more my frailty here is try'd, The more I toil and grieve, The more thy grace is glorify'd, Which shall the vict'ry give!

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

GOD'S BOUNTY FAILS NOT, BUT MAN MUST WAIT WITH PATIENCE. DANIEL XII.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as

the stars for ever and ever.

4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5 ¶ Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the

other on that side of the bank of the river.

6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my

Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

13 But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

Mrs. H. More.

GOD'S MERCIFUL CARE PERCEPTIBLE THROUGH MAN'S WHOLE CAREER.

We have blessed assurance that the Eternal is watchful over his worshippers. Do we not read of the Deity, that "He has given his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone?" This, if awake to passing events, we must clearly perceive from our own experience. Asleep and awake, we are protected by the Lord from invisible dangers. We are saved by his loving care, and defended by his almighty arm. It is, therefore, but an exercise of common sense, to believe that he sends his angels to our aid, for how else could we have passed in safety through the manifold perils which beset our path, even from those moments when we reposed on the bosom of our mother? How could we have escaped death, when he hovered about our cradles? how have survived the diseases incident to childhood? and still more, how could we, uninjured, have passed through those years of our youth, when strangers to prudence, we found ourselves the slaves of levity and sensual cravings; exposing ourselves to pain and sickness by our excesses, and invoking misery? He sends his angels to guard us, and how marvellously have we been preserved in many cases, where but for such kindly care, life must have been inevitably lost. We have been incomprehensibly fenced in from danger, in various ways. Our innocence has been preserved, when we ourselves have been too weak to guard it, and when without any visible external protection, we have been exposed to sin. In all our ways they have deigned to be our unseen companions; they have been our guides, our monitors, our protectors. They only abandon us when we stubbornly reject their proffered aid, and neglect their salutary admonitions. If resolute to disobey, we scorn their love, and show that we are not willing to devote ourselves to him, whose ministers they are; if we daringly intimate that we will not strive, like them, faithfully to fulfil the duties imposed upon us by our heavenly Father; consequences the most fatal ensue.

But such a course must not, shall not be ours. This day we solemnly renew the determination, in all things to follow thy commandments; in all circumstances to aim at glorifying thy name. We offer to thee, this, our resolution, as a morning sacrifice, in the hope that mean, and humble as it is, thou wilt be graciously pleased to accept it.

Great are the mercies we have, from time to time, had to acknowledge. The Lord has, indeed. dealt bountifully with us. May we, while life endures, remember to whom we are indebted for all we owe. Do we enjoy vigorous health? Are we free from alarm? Are we surrounded by friends? For all these blessings, let our souls praise the Lord, who, if our trials have not been few, has been graciously pleased thus to mingle alleviating circumstances, that we might not re-

sign ourselves to despair.

When oppressed by sickness or sorrow, in the midst of his distress, man should glorify his Maker, who places him in the furnace, but to purify his nature: to cleanse him from the corruptions of the world. Oh that the Immortal Spirit may ever ground itself against sinking into that spiritual stupor, which must render it indifferent to the concerns of a future life! Too many we see at ease in this world, unmindful of their sins. These will, perhaps, go down to the grave without exhibiting any frightful change to the world: but Oh, what anguish, what weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth may await them, when here they are seen no more!

Grant us thy grace, most merciful Father, with persevering fidelity and vivid zeal, to walk before thee, even as thy angels do in purity of heart, and with true devotion to thy glory. Like them, dispose us to fly to the assistance of suffering mertals. Be it ours to aid them when they are in distress; to comfort them in the passing day, and if possible, to render ourselves instrumental

to their future salvation.

If we constantly act such a part from our love of God, then shall we find ourselves truly blessed, while we remain here. Leading a holy life, we may move on with composure and gladness, to the end of our mortal career, in the conviction that, our pilgrimage concluded, thou wilt not disdain to accord to us the high privilege of mingling with the blissful society of heavenly spirits assembled round thy eternal throne, there to behold thee as thou art, and evermore to rejoice in the presence of our Lord.

SUPERSTITION AFFECTS TO HONOUR GOD BY IDLE OBSER-VANCES; TRUE RELIGION BY CHARITY.

The Tyrians, it seems, when Alexander besieged them, imagined, they saw by some extraordinary motion, that the image of Apollo, in which all their hopes of protection were placed, intended to quit their city; to prevent this misfortune they fastened their god with chains of gold. This I own was a foolish superstition; but methinks we may sanctify the thought, and almost learn a believer's conduct from it. When

he imagines his God means to forsake him, he holds him (if I may be allowed to say so) with chains of love, he throws around him the tender arms of his piety, he weeps on his bosom, and, to make use of a better example than that of the Tyrians, he constrains him, as the disciples did at Emmaus, "Abide with me for the day is far spent, and it is towards evening."

True love to God is not superstitious. Superstition usually springs from one of these four principles. Either first from servile fear, which makes people believe, that God is always wrathful, and invents means to appease him, employing for this purpose ridiculous practices unworthy of humanity itself. Or 2ndly, from a natural inclination, which we all have, to idolatry, which makes men think, they see some ray of the divinity in extraordinary creatures, and on this account they transfer a part of their devotion to them. Or 3rdly from hypocrisy, which makes men willing to discharge their obligations to God by grimace, and by zeal for external services; for which purpose they can perform a great number of any kind. Finally, from presumption, which makes men serve God after their own fancies, and establish such a worship as pleases and flatters themselves, without regarding whether they please God. All these appear in the superstitions of the Church of Rome, the greatest part of which sprang from fear of the fire of purgatory, as mortifications, masses, jubilees, indulgencies, penal satisfactions, and many more of the same kind. It is also evident, that some came from that dreadful propensity natural to all mankind to deify creatures; to this may be referred the worshipping of images, the invocations of saints and angels, the custom of swearing by creatures, the adoration of relics, pilgrimages, the adoration of the host, and many such things. Nor is it less true, that hypocrisy produced others, as beads, chaplets, rosaries, prayers by tale, frequent fasts, visiting holy places, &c. And finally, some came from human vanity and presumption, as festivals, pro-cessions, the magnificence of churches, and, in general, all pompous ceremonies in the worship of God, All these are contrary to the love of God; which is free from superstition. It is superior to servile fear, and accompanied with a persuasion that God is good, and that he loves us. It has only God for its object, it acknowledges between God and his creatures, however amiable the latter may be, an infinite distance, and consequently cannot bestow any part of that worship upon them, which is due to him alone. It is sincere and solid, more attentive to the interior than to the outward appearance; for, having its principal seat in the heart, it rectifies a man's sentiments, whence as from a sacred source good works flow. In a word, it is humble and submissive to the will of God, which it regards as the only rule of its duty, without paying any respect to the vanity of sense or the caprice of the human mind.

Genuine love to God is tranquil and peaceable, acquiescing in the ways of providence without complaining, happy in itself without inquietude, and without chagrin, flying from quarrels and divisions, easy and gentle in all things, yielding in every thing, except in the service of God, and the grand interest of salvation, in which love itself is inflexible, and in-

capable of compounding.

Real love is always active. Its tranquillity is not negligence, it is lively and energetical, always in peace but always in action; like the heavens, whence it came, without noise, in profound silence, perpetually moving and incessantly shedding benign influences, it is not content to seek God in his temples only: but it pursues him in houses, chambers and closets, it rises after him to heaven, it enjoys him in the heart, where it entertains and adores him, it goes even to seek him in his members, and chiefly in the poor, whose secret necessities it enquires, and endeavours to relieve. Claude.

## EVENING.—JUNE 3.

THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.—
WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

And do you not "thy neighbour" know, And what he claims of you, And why must you divide thy love That he may share it too? And do you ask, if neighbours can Each change of fortune bear, And still remain devoted when Debate and strife appear? You say, the friendship of the world But flatters to betray,-A syren, wooing with its song The victim it shall slay-That, like the serpent, there distils A poison from its breath, While those allured within its coils There find despair and death!

But know, "thy neighbour" is not one Whose friendship you shall seek, Nor held by those unholy ties, Which hands unholy break: For lo! he claims you by that law Which in its boundless span Embraces in one brotherhood The family of man; That law, "to love him as thyself," So graciously designed; That law of love, which God himself Delivered to mankind. Then go, and be it thine, O man, Where'er thy lot shall fall, To pay thy portion of that debt Which God has laid on all!

"Thy neighbour!"—tis that widow'd one, Whom evil men oppress; It is her orphan child, who shares In all her heart's distress:

Then go, and with a patient ear Receive their tale of grief, And, fearless of oppression's arm, Work out for them relief.

And see where droops that suffering child, With soot and rags defaced, Whose toil on Britain's hearths employ'd Has long its sons disgraced:

Then go, and, rescued from his task, Repair what ill you can, And give thy earnest care that he

"Thy neighbour!"—'tis yon felon youth,
Who now, in bars confined,
Is teaching, and by turns is taught
To prey upon mankind;
Then go, and wean his heart from crime
His spirit from despair:
And so shall he through life rejoice
That you have found him there.

May grow a virtuous man.

And look where goes that outcast, whom Degrading vices stain—
Who mourns the virtue she has lost,
And yearns to have again:
Then haste, and to her rescue raise
An ark of refuge, where
Religion may with peace and hope
Allure her footsteps there.

Literary Gazette.

THOSE WHO SUFFER NOW, SHALL HEREAFTER BE REWARDED. LUKE, VI.

12 It came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 ¶ And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples:

and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; 14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon called Zelotes,

16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases.

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all,

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are ye, that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

# TENDERNESS DUE TO OUR BRETHREN AND TO THE BRUTE CREATION FROM THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN.

He who persecutes his fellow-man, must expect that the accusing voice of the sufferer will not be unheard by his Creator. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground," said the Lord to Cain, the murderer of Abel. Now, as then, the voice of complaint from those of our brethren who suffer from cruelty and injustice continues to seek the throne of the Most High.

But not only the voices of men—even the groans of animals tortured by the wanton cruelty of him, who, a human being, created lord over them, and who ought to protect, and spare them unnecessary anguish, may meet the eternal ear, and provoke the just indignation of the Deity. Man their fellow-creature, should treat them with

consideration. As he hopes for mercy himself, he ought to shew mercy to them.

If, however, we waive this, and take it for granted that the inferior animals have been handed over by their Creator, to be arbitrarily disposed of by man, shall our brethren, groaning under oppression and violence, have cause to appeal against our doings, to the Lord?

Foolish, as well as sinful, is the course commonly pursued by men, in forming their estimate of a neighbour's worth. Pedigrees and court dresses, a handsome face or a ready wit, store of gold, or eloquent speech, we see frequently allowed to determine the value of a friend. Can his true value be ascertained by a reference to any of these? It would be about as rational to form our judgment of the importance of the sun, from his giving life to the spawn of frogs, or from the hue of his rays, as reflected from fragments of broken glass.

Every human soul, even that of a Cain or a Judas, has some claim to our consideration, because it is the work of God, and because its most fearful errors, are but the neglected and degenerate germs of goodness. The souls of such offenders are indeed abased and sullied by dreadful errors, but these may eventually be wiped away by redeeming mercy. At the last day, our spirits will be astonished at the presence, of many who will be our companions in that land where the soul of a monarch has no more ancestors or attendants than that of the beggar.

Shall we, then, ever feel ourselves justified in scorning a human being, who, fallen as he may be, is still capable of becoming a heir of heaven? Respect we agree to pay to high birth, to grey hairs, to the dress of silk, and other favourable distinctions in this life. To the soul, the immortal part of our neighbour, it is at least equally due, and the more so in proportion as its owner proves himself superior to grovelling and sensual desires.

All nations are disposed to shew some respect to the dead, and the corpse of the poorest man inspires awe in the beholders. Strangely inconsistent is our conduct! We often pay respect to the unconscious remains of the departed, which we thought not of offering while the same form was animated by an immortal soul. We stand humbled in the presence of the dust which has been dissolved by corruption, and sinful thoughts are banished from our bosoms. Hide yourselves, then, ye lowly ones, in your humble dwellings, and be consoled to know that, when dead.

you will at least be distinguished from the brutes, to whose level unfeeling pride would fain reduce you now, while yet you are in the land of the living. Then will you receive honours similar to those which living despots gain—that is, you will be approached with solemnity, and indeed with fear.

To despise a neighbour, is an act of unpardonable folly; it is a childish extravagance based on prejudice and ignorance, and can never accomplish any good or important object. He who would for himself win respect and esteem, must not expect to gain it by viewing others with insolent disdain, or by degrading treatment; they should rather seek what they desire, by taking care to lead a holy life, and making all their actions indicate superior intelligence and love.

O great and benevolent Father! has the cry of a fellow creature, or a suffering animal, tortured by our cruelty, reached thy ear?-Forgive our sinful weakness, and so enlarge our understanding, that in this we may offend no more. We would fain resemble our blessed Redeemer, who renounced his glory, humbled himself, and became as a servant, to save mortals from everlasting ruin. How merciful is our Creator! His heaven is open to all, though the halls of the great in this world were sternly closed against the Son of God. Should not we desire to be merciful as he was? Let us then treat all our fellow creatures with indulgent kindness. Never, so we trust, shall the cry of distress, caused by our cruelty, come again before our common Parent. Spirit of the living God, strengthen our hearts, that we nay not forego the resolution we now pronounce!

PRECARIOUS CONDITION OF HUMANITY.—HARDNESS OF HEART TO BE AVOIDED.

O tremble, you sinners, who are at ease! However gay and prosperous you may be; to-morrow, to-day you may be reduced as low as Nebuchadnezzar. The Lord God, indeed, does not always execute judgment in so remarkable a manner. But will you presume upon his patience? Even though you should be suffered to go down to your grave in peace, you will not therefore escape. Has He no terrors in reserve, beyond the present life? O sirs, a more tremendons sentence, than what Nebuchadnezzar experienced, awaits the impenitent in a future world. Soon will it be said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

But we leave not the Chaldean monarch in his wretched state of exile and ferocity. Behold, then, in this instance, the goodness as well as the severity of God! After seven years, for so it had been foretold, he recovered the full exercise of his reason, the possession of his government, and all his former magnificence. But, though this alteration was astonishing, one still more remarkable took place; the moral character of the man appeared to be changed. Upon the restoration of his understanding, he manifested very different dispositions of mind. He had learned, in a painful manner, the universal and uncontrollable sovereignty of Jehovah; and therefore he bowed before him with strong marks of humiliation and obedience. He blessed and praised, and honoured the Most High, and confessed the design and the justice of his late awful visitation. For the conviction of others, too, he published his case to the whole world, (the narration being delivered in his own words) and solemnly called upon all persons to admire, reverence, and serve the true God, whose dominion reaches throughout all ages, and extends to every inhabitant both of heaven and earth.

The history before us is full of wonders: we do not attempt to solve the difficulties which might be raised concerning it. We presume not to decide upon the real character and final state of Nebuchadnezzar. Doubtless, a powerful influence had been exerted in subduing the proud and rebellious opposition of his heart against God: but it may be questioned, whether the change was universal and abiding. At least, we know that many a haughty sinner had been so intimidated or softened by extreme suffering, as to make public confessions of his guilt, and to recommend the religion

he had before persecuted, who yet never became a true convert. Let us suspect and try ourselves: and while we allow that it is not enough to reform the life from gross iniquities, let us pray, that we may possess "the power of godliness."

But, though caution be necessary, we are inclined to admit the king of Babylon into the list of true penitents. We dare not deny the mercy of God to the most presumptuous offenders; and in the present instance, it must be acknowledged. there were many very favourable appearances, and such effects as are usually thought the genuine fruits of repentance. On this charitable supposition, we are constrained to cry out, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" We admire and praise the riches of that grace, which can subdue and pardon so obdurate a sinner. We adore the condescension of that glorious personage, who is "the repairer of the breach," and has opened, for those who have been most abandoned, a way of access to God through his own blood. Let those "who have received the atonement," stand forward, as Nebuchadnezzar, to confess their obligations, and invite others to join with them, in giving all blessing and honour unto him, who has done so great things for them! They can tell, from what a depth of guilt and misery he has redeemed them, and they will number amongst their most valuable mercies, those painful dispensations, which tended to abase their pride, and to produce in them "the obedience of faith."

But is there no cause of terror to the careless? Or, because the grace of God is so free and extensive, do all therefore obtain forgiveness? Far otherwise. Many, alas! die, as they live, in utter hardness and impenitence of heart; and in all such cases the gospel itself forbids us to hope. O submit to your rightful Lord! Take hold of his covenant, and so make peace with him. For "woe is unto him, who striveth with his Maker."

Robinson.

MORNING.—JUNE 4.

GOD'S PROMISE CANNOT FAIL.

Our God, how firm his promise stands
E'en when he hides his face!
He trusts, in our Redeemer's hands,
His glory and his grace.

Beneath his smiles my heart hath liv'd, And part of heaven possess'd; I thank him for the grace receiv'd, And trust him for the rest

Jesus, my God, I know his name; His name is all my trust: He will not put my soul to shame, Nor let my hope be lost.

Thus will he own my worthless name Before his Father's face; And in the new Jerusalem Assign my soul a place.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

THE EXTENT OF GOD'S GOODNESS BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION. I. COR. II.

9 Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the

spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

### UNDOUBTED EFFICACY OF FERVENT PRAYER.

Wandering from the path which reason and religion concur in pointing out to us as that which we ought to pursue, how truly may each of us exclaim, in the words of scripture, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep." Thus lost, thus fallen, how shall we again find the right way?-where shall we gain strength again to reach the elevation once ours. Who will lead us back to our divine Shepherd? Sinful, foolish soul! Pray!—pray unremittingly! That is the answer to thy ques-Look at the first followers of Christ, and copy their doings. Behold Peter in fetters, and see them removed from his limbs, while he is engaged in fervent prayer. Mark how efficacious the prayer of the pious Elias. On his timely petition, the parched earth was refreshed with rain, and the Almighty will not fail to refresh thee with proofs of his care and his love, if thou art constant in thy supplications. Of this entertain no doubt. As Jesus himself, when he offered his prayers with loud lamentations, was relieved from the anguish which he had known, so will the Author of thy being comfort thee in the days of thy greatest distress, when thou prayest to him with a pure and repentant heart, and satisfy thee that his worshipper is the object of his unceasing

But the misgivings of the sinner may whisper to him, "Can prayers of mine prevail? Can petitions from me prove equally powerful to move compassion as those preferred by Holy men in former days?" Should the suggestion cross our minds, it will be desirable that we should remember that He to whom we make our appeal, invariably good and great, is still ready to extend mercy to those who seek it, as he was in the days of old. He cannot fail. He is the same vesterday, to day, and for ever.

Let the humble follower of the Lord recal his own experience, and ask, when did celestial mercy and divine goodness cease to manifest themselves? Is not our Lord always kind to those who trust in him, and to those who search him out? These, easy as they are, it will be found, are the only conditions with which the Christian has to comply, in order to gain the favour of his God. Pray to him in humility, then, and if thy hope is in him, if thy soul go in quest of him, it will not seek the Lord in vain. It should be thy constant effort to walk before him, as his holy prophets, as the faithful apostles, and as his onlybegotten Son did.

This do we know, Oh Father! and with this conviction on our minds, we now come before thee, to open our hearts. We humbly entreat at thy hands, that thou wilt give us strength, and with it the sincere inclination to do good. We desire to walk in thy ways, and beseech thee to grant thy assistance to that end. Not for an abundance of temporal, but costly and perishable goods do we solicit thee. Taught by our Saviour to limit our petitions to present wants, we only pray that thou wilt be pleased to "give us this day our daily bread." We sigh not for the vanities of life, but we implore thee to forgive us, in thy infinite mercy, the various transgressions into which we have been led, and deliver us from evil.

The reflecting Christian knows that it is to a great and good Deity he makes his appeal. We in vain determine on redeeming past errors by future labours for our spiritual advancement, if time be not afforded to carry our resolutions into effect, and if aid be not graciously afforded from above, that we may not fail in the effort. Our time is in the hands of the Mighty One. It is for Him to say, Live, or, Die. His fiat will at once give us life, strength, and capacity to reform our minds. May He, in his mercy, suspend, for a season, the execution of that sentence which we have provoked, and may we, enlightened by holy meditation, make a wise and beneficial use of the indulgence so awarded. Before all things may we learn anxiously to seek the Lord and his righteousness.

Not presuming to suggest, still less to dictate what our eternal Father should immediately ordain, for our solace and repose; before him, with devout humility, we desire to lay our cares and our wishes, in the anxious hope that he will not refuse to listen to us, and that he will grant us whatever is most essential to our well-being.

We know not how to pray aright, unless our Creator condescends to inform our minds as to the real state of our wants. Oh! then, may it be his good pleasure to regulate all our thoughts, to govern our hearts, and guide us into the right

wav.

May his blessed Spirit descend upon us, while we bend before him, that praying to him with our lips, our thoughts may not, as in past times, wander from him, and occupy themselves with the cares and pleasures of the world. May he bestow that wisdom which will teach us to be humble, pious, and contented in the station assigned to us. To his will we desire to be meekly resigned. Patience and virtuous forbearance under those trials which may be reserved for us, we desire to make our own. When most depressed, we trust we shall still retain hope in the grace of the Deity, and unfailing confidence in his just, benevolent, and paternal government. If we pray in such a frame of mind, we may rest assured that we shall not invoke support or favour from above in vain. In this conviction we shall calmly advance towards the goal of human exstence, and tranquilly await that moment which will finally close our mortal career, reposing on the forgiving love of our Deliverer and our God.

#### FAITH IN GOD CAN CHEER A DUNGEON.

I bless God I never found so much internal spiritual solace and unmixed joy and comfort, as I have, experimented in these tive months' endurance. Let never an Christian fear a prison,

it being the only place where (wanting other books) a man may best study the book of the knowledge of himself, having a long vacation from all business, but praying unto, and praising God, in Christ, by the Spirit's assistance. I cannot take Martha's part, for none must come to me; nor Mary's part, to wait upon the ordinances, which my soul thirsts after; therefore my chamber is like the sanctum sanctorum, where wittingly none may enter but the High-priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus. I did not think that there had been so much ignorance, impotence, impatience, ingratitude, pride, inordinate affection to creature comforts, revenge, diffidence of God, self-love, and iniquity of all sorts in me, as I find there is; who am not only a poor sinner, but sin itself, a very mass of sin. I find it very hard to rely nakedly on God's goodness, not to feel the heat of persecution, not to be careful when all is taken away. Lo, so this darkness and filthiness of spirit is only discovered by the light of Christ, by whose lowliness, in washing the apostles' feet, I see my loftiness and want of condescension when I had power; by his patience, my many passions and heart-risings against instruments: by his obedience to the death, my reluctancies; by his faithfulness, my former backslidings; by his fruitfulness, and doing good, my barrenness, and the little good I did when I had opportunity; and by his liberality, my penuriousness; whereby I adore and acknowledge his justice that he hath most righteously deprived me of my liberty and estate; all which drives me nearer to Christ, and makes me take faster hold of his righteousness. I now understand, through grace, how precious he is. If it were not for Christ, what a miserable condition were I now in, that might suddenly be sent to contend with the wrath of God, in everlasting burnings! And this makes me love Christ the more, having forgiven me more than others: and having had ten thousand talents forgiven me, I would forgive any wrong-doers; and this keeps me humble, and from censoriousness. I bless God, I have ransacked into every corner of my soul; I have, with David, Job, Esay, and Paul, bewailed my hereditary disease and heart-corruption. I feel it is as a rotten tooth that aches, would fain be rid of it, have condemned myself for it, cried out against it, as the ravished damsel, Deut. xxii. 26. The like for sins done in my inclination, which, by preventing grace, are secret, and only known to God; and I have mourned over my secret sins, only known to God and myself; over the sins of my youth, which were committed faster than can be named; for those which I did not know to be sin, and those that I have forgotten; and especially for my actually known sins, committed against love and light, promises and covenants. I have confessed them all with a heavy, bleeding, broken, and contrite spirit; and O that I had all sin, as sin, in a greater execration; my grief is for having offended so gracious a Father, that will not damn me for it; if there were no hell nor judge, I would rather die than willingly offend him any more, and I cannot satisfy divine justice for one vain thought, therefore I fly to Christ, and close with him upon a free promise as a poor penitent sinner; no merits but the merits of my Saviour; I take in whole Christ, and not one drop of my puddled water shall be mingled with the ocean of his pure and perfect righteousness; and I give up myself wholly to him, as by a deed of gift, to be at his dispose; and I know he hath received me, "I am my beloved, and my beloved is mine." and all is mine, death itself; I have a sweet certificate from heaven of the pardon of sin, justification, reconciliation, and adoption. I know God's heart and his eyes are upon me perpetually, that no tender father or mother can have so special a care of any sick imprisoned child, as he hath of me. I believe that God who hath given a property to the needle to keep fixed, though the ship overturn, will keep me faithful

to the death, and that I shall receive the crown of life, and stand with as much confidence at the great day, as if I had never sinned; and herein I am confirmed by the testimony of the spirit, and scripture evidences.

Letter from Mr. Justice Cooke when in Prison.

## EVENING.-JUNE 4.

THE ROAD TO HEAVEN.

Death cannot make my soul afraid, If God be with me there: Soft is the passage through the shade, And all the prospect fair.

Jesus, the vision of thy face
Hath overpow'ring charms:
Scarce shall I feel death's cold embrace,
If Christ be in my arms.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-with ring flow'rs:
Death, like a narrow stream, divides
The heav'nly land from our's.

Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood, Stand dress'd in living green: So to the Jews old Canaan stood, While Jordan roll'd between.

Countess of Huntingdon's Collection.

DEATH OF THE PROPHET OF THE LORD. DEUT. XXXIV.

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,

3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho,

the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

4 And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

5 ¶ So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

6 ¶ And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7 ¶ And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

8 ¶ And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

9 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.

10 ¶ And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.

11 In all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror

which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

## THE CHRISTIAN WILL DESERVE TO BE MOURNED AFTER DEATH.

It has been said, "there is a tear for all that die." Grief may be excessive and reprehensible, but nature claims some tribute of sorrow, when those whom we have esteemed and loved, depart. Among the chosen people of God we read, "The children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab, thirty days." So, perhaps, each of us may be allowed a hope, that our friends will weep for us when we are gone; that they will surround our cold remains with affectionate regret, and recal with sorrow our parting struggles, while preparing those funeral arrangements which are to consign the body to the corruption of the grave. But it is our higher hope, that while they are thus engaged, the immortal spirit will be soaring to its eternal author; to the regions of unfailing joy.

If our friends lament our fall, and fondly remember our good works and virtues, which in moments of regret for those beheld no more, their love will magnify, it is not to be forgotten, that while they are so engaged, the omniscient Judge of all the earth will behold at a glance our countless faults. Weighed in the balances, how surely shall we be found wanting. What hope then can remain for us. None but that which we derive from the merits of our great Redeemer.

Saviour of man, fail us not in that awful moment! Oh, let the efficacy of thy precious blood, be proved in our salvation! Grant that in thy righteousness we may live and behold our Lord!

Virtue, alas! is not of this world. Where it is found, it seems an exotic, as delicate as it is beautiful, and too apt to fade and wither, blighted by the rude and pestilent air of this world. In the regions of light beyond the grave, its native home, it will shine with unsullied glory for ever.

Here we see all things but dimly! "darkly as through a glass." There, at the fountain head of truth, we shall see all things as they really are, and be able to explore the wonderful works of the Deity, which here we can but faintly perceive, and imperfectly comprehend. Even the supreme Majesty of heaven will then be known to us. Every

assistance which we experience, will be a distinct and complete perception; the joy in our Lord here, intercepted by many tears and sorrows, will there be full and unalloyed, and it will be a part of our celestial nature to sing his praise.

And blessings then will be communicated to us, of which our finite powers, while here, could form no idea. Sounds of joy, and words of grace, which our mortal ears could not hear, will gladden our souls, while immortal worshippers join to honour the love of the Saviour to man, and his obedience to the Omnipotent, even to death. All this shall we behold and know as a part

of the magnificence of heaven.

What bliss! what glory will the true children of God then share. Surrounded by true worshippers of the Godhead, every one of the countless host, our friend, every where the purest adoration, extatic praise, and fervent thanks for blessings ineffable, will be poured forth before the eternal throne. New senses, and an enlarged capacity for enjoyment, will there be the reward of long forgotten works of love.

If such the rich inheritance of the sincere Christian; how insignificant, Oh, how mean is all earthly grandeur, or even earthly devotion, in comparison with that which we shall then be

permitted to witness and to share!

While here in this obviously imperfect state of being, our powers are too limited even to satisfy ourselves, when we lift our thoughts to the Deity. How weak is memory! We forget the benefits we receive from the immortal giver of all good, from day to day. Were those only recalled which we have experienced during the last ten years of our lives, they would seem almost as numerous as the sands on the sea shore. From hour to hour, they cheer and refresh us, yet pass unregarded.

A lovely summer night, rich in fragrance, and enlivened with sweetest melodies, invites us to pray; but sleep presses on the weary eyelids, as discontent and pusillanimity often weigh down the mind. How vividly did the anticipation of this month wake our anxious desires during the gloomy days of winter! It has arrived, but still we have many wishes unsatisfied. Thus it will ever be while we remain below. We may grieve to find ourselves ever repining before our Creator, like children who have hurt themselves, but it is the condition of mortality. Such is the nature of man.

We deeply feel that not yet are we able, worthily, to join in the praises of the Lord. With eyes cast on the ground, but with thoughts silently ascending to heaven, let our prayers be breathed. A glance thither suffices to wake a wish in our souls, that we could raise a strain in honour of our God, worthy of his goodness. The wish, we trust, will one day be realised. To fear God; to avoid sin, and to do good to all men, must, for the present, be our object, that when we, in the course of nature, find repose in the grave, our brethren may sorrow for our departure, as the children of Israel did for that of their inspired leader, Moses.

## HEART-CHEERING EFFECTS OF FAITH IN LIFE'S CLOSING SCENES.

Returning again from the court when he had received his sentence, he came into the prison very cheerfully with a Bible in his hand, saying, "I shall have the use of this book two days more, and then enjoy the fulness of the gospel to all eternity."

His daughter coming in to him, he said, "Where hast thou been all this while; I thought thou hadst been ashamed of my chains; but they that will not bear the cross, shall not

wear the crown."

A gentleman coming to visit him, said—"Shall I petition for your life?" Col. Axtell replied—"Sir, you offer me to my loss."

A friend going into Gloucestershire, said to him, "Sir, what message will you now send to the good people in the

country.

Col. Axtell answered, "Remember my dear love to them all, and tell them that their prayers are answered. Bid them keep close to Christ, and let them not touch with Surplis or Common Prayer Book; and bid them (whatever they do) love the image of Christ wherever they see it, in Presbyterian, Independent, Baptized, or other; and take heed of striking in with anything, that will strike out any of the offices of Jesus Christ."

Four of his fellow prisoners passed by his chamber door, as they were going forth to execution, and being denied sight of them, he called them by their names, and with a mighty fervent spirit, said, "The Lord go with you; the angel of his presence stand by you." And then turning about to his friends, said, "Oh! they are gone to heaven before me, but we will give them up to the Lord," and so went to prayer; and presently after he went to prayer again, saying, "God hath said that he will make us joyful in the house of prayer."

And afterwards, thinking that he should not die that day, desired some retirement; but news coming that he must die within an hour (though it was not so) he quickly made himself ready to go, and looking upon his gloves, said, "these are my wedding gloves, my mortal must marry immortality."

Some friends going to see him the night before he was executed, found him at supper very cheerful; and many being present, he said, "Take heed of temporising, &c., for that hath been the occasion of great evil." Then speaking to an officer there present, that had continued till of late in the army, said, "Brother, thou hast been greatly guilty herein, the Lord forgive thee, thou hast a great hand in this."

To which the person replied, "I confess I have been so too

much.'

Col. Axtell answered, "There is yet mercy for thee, if the Lord give thee repentance."

That evening many friends being with him, he prayed with them, and in that duty, the Lord by his spirit, filled him with excellent expressions, to the great refreshing of those about him. And bewailing the great divisions amongst God's people, he said, "Lord, if they will not live together in love, thou wilt make them lie together in sufferings." Then minding their present condition, said, "Lord, death is the king of terrors to nature, but it is a believer's choice friend; it is thy high way to lead us into glory."

After prayer, taking notice of his daughter, he said to her, "Get an interest in Christ and keep close to him; he will be a better father to thee than I," and so took his leave of

her.

The day of their execution being come, several godly ministers spent some time with them in prayer, viz., with Col. Axtell, and Col. Hacker, and many friends coming in to pay their last respects; Col. Axtell seeing one of his familiar friends and companions, said, "My dear Brother, thou art better than I am, and yet I must go to heaven before thee for all that."

He very cheerfully said to divers then with him, "Dear friends, rejoice, I am going where ye shall be also: yea, where we shall be for for ever with the Lord, and never part, and be without any more change. I beseech you follow the lamb wherever he goeth, though he may lead you in a harsh, dismal, and difficult way; yet at last he will bring you into a pleasant path, and cause you to lie down in green pastures, in the land of rest, 'Oh be faithful unto the death, and he will give you a crown of life,' as he hath given to your suffering brethren."

Oh! all that we have, or do suffer, is but to make Christ and heaven more sweet, dear and glorious to us; all the sad steps we shall tread on this ladder, is but to mount us to heaven, for at the top are angels ready to receive us, as was on Jacob's ladder. All the things I meet with move me not, I bless my God, for I am sure to fight a good fight, and finish

my course with joy.

Afterwards taking his leave of his son, embracing him in his arms, he said, "My dear son, fare thee well, I must leave thee; get an interest in Christ and love him, nothing else

will stand thee in stead but an interest in him."

Then calling for his Bible, he hugged it, saying, "This hath the whole cause in it, and I may carry this without offence." And calling to a friend, he desired him to remember his love to the congregration where he was a member, and after took his leave of all his friends, exhorting them with much cheerfulness to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and keep close to him, and so with great joy addressed himself to go to his next work.

Col. Axtell before his Execution.

## MORNING.-JUNE 5.

THE SAVIOUR'S TRIUMPH.

Now let our pains be all forgot, Our hearts no more repine, Our sufferings are not worth a thought, When, Lord, compared with thine.

In lively figures here we see
The bleeding prince of love;
Each of us hope, he died for me,
And then our griefs remove.

Our humble faith here takes her rise
While sitting round his board;
And back to Calvary she flies
To view her groaning Lord.

His soul what agonies it felt
When his own God withdrew!
And the large load of all our guilt
Lay heavy on him too.

But the divinity within
Supported him to bear:
Dying he conquered hell and sin,
And made his triumph there.

Watts.

### THE WICKED EVENTUALLY SUFFER. PROVERBS XXI.

2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

3 To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

Jord than sacrince

4 An high look, and a proud heart, and the ploughing of the wicked, is sin.

5 The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness;

but of every one that is hasty only to want.

6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity

tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

7 The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because

they refuse to do judgment.

8 The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the

pure, his work is right.

9 It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

10 The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.

11 When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

12 The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wicked-

THE CHRISTIAN MUST NOT MURMUR AT SEEING OTHERS MORE PROSPEROUS THAN HIMSELF.

A grudging spirit which sighs to know comforts possessed by others, from which we are debarred, is frequently found among men. We ought to be on our guard against it. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?" is the language of the householder in the gospel, to the labourers who complained that others were better rewarded than themselves. Might not the Supreme Being address to us the same words? Have we not often looked with an evil eye on the happier condition of some of our brethren? The truth confessed, we have not been strangers to jealousy and envy. Often have we found ourselves repining, and drawing comparisons between our own condition and that of some of our brethren; thus, in some measure, impugning the

justice of the Almighty. We blame his dispensations when we presume to murmur, or to act harshly by a neighbour, or in any way oppose the interests of those whom we regard as more

highly favoured than ourselves.

Why, why are not we, the selfish discontented spirit, will often mentally exclaim, as rich or as happy as this, or that man, whose merit is not superior to mine? When men indulge in such reflections, they often forget that those who are happier, may also be, in many respects, better men. It is very possible, that blind to their deserts, we suspect them of being worse than they are, while, with like blindness, though indicated in a different way, we give ourselves credit for virtues which we do not possess.

We are not to criticise the doings of our Crea-In distributing his blessings in this world, he does not vet act according to his justice, but according to his wisdom; and it is not to be forgotten, that with the power, he has the right to

dispose of his own as he will.

And is this all? Ought we not to remember that many gratifications and advantages we owe to our God, which we could not claim from his justice, we owe to his bounty. We are disposed to murmur, because he favours others so largely. Yet, if we look inwardly, and recal the past, we shall feel that we owe much to his beneficence, yet have ever been wanting in gratitude. We fail to note the blessings bestowed on ourselves, and heed not the love and mercy, the various sources of abounding bliss, which we ought to recognise with exulting thankfulness.

The arrangements made by a gracious Providence for supplying our wants, and giving us even more than our necessities require, we regard with indifference. The wide distinction between ourselves and some thousands whom we look upon, who are destitute of comfort, and denied to lead the happy and peaceful life which is ours, we seldom take into account. That, we are content to view as a matter of course. On a distinction made in favour of ourselves, we never presume to question the justice and goodness of the Deity.

Yet not small are the favours which we have to acknowledge. Thousands and thousands of our fellow men cannot lead the happy life which we do. Our present position gives us the enjoyment of liberty. This is a blessing of which many of our fellow men, shut up within gloomy walls, have to deplore the loss. They have the same feelings,

the same wants and wishes as ourselves; but it is theirs to breathe a polluted atmosphere; to recline on a rugged couch, and to sigh in vain for Sweet sleep has been a glimpse of the sun. with us during the past night, and we have risen in health to hail the return of a new morrow. Not such is the case with multitudes, who, having passed a sleepless night, look with aching eyes on another opening day, which brings them no relief, and promises no respite from sickness and sorrow.

If affluence is not our lot, we have necessary sustenance within our reach. Millions of unhappy beings are at this moment in want of food. Health is ours, but countless thousands of the sons of men, languish on a bed of sickness, and every movement they hazard, is attended with excruci-

ating pain.

Taking this view of the state of our fellow christians, we must perceive that we have known more enjoyment than, our deserts being duly weighed, could have fallen to our share. for us to envy a few the greater comforts they appear to enjoy, while too many are denied participation in those which are securely ours. Shall we be dissatisfied with that which God has assigned to us, which is suited to our capacity, and which, humble as it may be, is still superior to our merits.

How great would be our offence, if we weakly allowed a repining spirit so far to prevail over our better feelings, as to arraign the dispensations of our Maker. Far be the thought from us, Oh Lord! Convinced that our actual condition is that which is most appropriate to our nature, and remembering our own lack of piety, which has so seldom merited thy loving-care, we will bless thee for every indication of thy bounty, however slight in itself; never forgetting that it is not in our power to decide whether others are more or less happy; and consequently, that we are not justified in attempting comparisons, which we know cannot be accurately made. It is for thee, O God! for thee alone, to regulate the order of thy government. At thy decrees we presume not to murmur. It is thine, according to thy good pleasure, to dispose of what is unquestionably thine. We cannot penetrate thy councils, and presume not to judge thy doings. Feeling thus, and rejoicing in the manifestations of kindness, which we ourselves have known, grant that, however surprising the disparity remarked between ourselves and others, that we, grateful for all we

have received, may never look with an evil eye on those, who to us appear more especially the objects of thy bounty; satisfied that thou art wise, and cannot be unjust.

#### SUPPORT FROM ABOVE.

Has not he sustained us hitherto in a wonderful manner? Are we not as much indebted to him for our support, as if we had been fed by a miracle? Perhaps, we have been assisted by those persons, who seemed as unlikely to be kind, as the very ravens. In many instances we have found men of a fierce and greedy disposition, resisting, as it were, the impulse of their nature, renounce their own advantages, and discover an uncommon tenderness and regard towards the despised and persecuted servants of the Lord. Surely, this ought to be ascribed to his powerful influence, exerted on the behalf of those, whom he has engaged to protect.

After some time, the faith of Elijah was tried in a different way. The brook, which had supplied him with water, dried up, and his situation, therefore, became untenable. However, the Lord, who still extended the same care toward him, directed him to go to Zarephath, a town of Phenicia, and assured him, that a poor widow of Gentile extraction, would support him, though banished from his own country. Many objections might arise in his mind; but he obeyed the command, and obtained the promised help.—May we possess a similar trust and submission! For what have we to do, but to follow our guide, though we know not whither he leads us? If, instead of this unreserved reliance upon him, we question the propriety of his appointments, and "consult with flesh and blood," we shall probably be tempted to take a wrong course, and thereby be involved in innumerable difficulties.

When the prophet reached the end of his journey, the ray was prepared for his reception. The very woman, whom he sought, came out of the city just as he arrived there; and perhaps it had been intimated to her, that, notwithstanding her distresses, she must entertain this singular guest. He found her gathering a few sticks, in order to bake her last handful of meal for herself and her son, expecting that they must shortly perish with hunger. Surely, he could not ask relief from one in such circumstances. But, having an infallible word to depend on, he entreated her to minister unto him out of her small pittance, and assured her from the Lord, that her wants should be supplied, though invisibly. This, doubtless, proved a severe trial to her, and remarkably displayed her faith and piety. She complied with the requisition, and obtained a recompense for her obedience. Long time she and her family, together with the prophet, were miraculously supported. It might seem to them continually, that they were eating their last morsel; but there still remained secret resources, so that "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail."

The same kind of interposition may not be granted to us. But why do we enquire with so much perplexity, "What shall we eat? or what shall we drink?" Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things, needful or expedient, shall be added unto you. What means your unbelief? Has God forgotten to be gracious, or violated his word? Does not he still feed the fowls of the air? And, since the fulness of the earth is his, has he not a thousand ways of relieving your necessities?

Do any persons wonder, that Elijah was sent to a Sidonian, rather than to any of the families of Israel? Our Lord has taught us, from this very instance, to beware of trusting to

our religious privileges, lest others with inferior advantages should obtain the preference. We should also fear to despise the ministers of God, lest we be punished by their utter removal. The gospel itself may be taken from us, and given to another people. For the Lord God acts in a sovereign manner: he bestows and withdraws his favours, where and when he releases

During Elijah's residence with the widow, her son sickened and died. The poor distressed mother, under deep convictions of her guilt, considered the calamity as a judgment inflicted upon her by the prophet, and with some impatience desired him to depart, as if she was not able to stand in his presence. This afflictive circumstance seemed at first to stagger his faith. But, in answer to his very fervent prayer, the child revived. Thus the Lord put a fresh and distinguished honour upon him, as well as magnified his own power. Before that time, no such miracle, that we know of, had ever been wrought upon the earth; and in this view, we cannot conceive a more illustrious instance of dependence upon God, than that of Elijah, who could ask and confidently expect such an event to take place.

Elijah's long continuance at Zarephath, probably, gave him some opportunities of usefulness in that city, and his retirement might prove a peculiar blessing to himself, and tend to qualify him for more public services. At length, the Lord directed him to quit this retreat, and go to the court of Ahab, intimating that he would shortly deliver Israel from the miseries of the famine. But how should he dare to stand before that impious prince, who, with a murderous rage, had sought him from kingdom to kingdom, that he might destroy him? His courage, however, did not fail, nor did he decline the perilous commission. He went without reluctance, and has

thereby furnished us with an example of obedience, zeal, and

fidelity, in the prospect of difficulties, dangers, and death.

Robinson.

## EVENING.-JUNE 5.

#### ANGRY PASSIONS STILLED BY CHRIST.

Sin, like a venomous disease, Infects our vital blood; The only balm is sovereign grace, And the physician, God.

Our beauty and our strength are fled, And we draw near to death; But Christ the Lord recals the dead With his Almighty breath.

Madness by nature reigns within,
The passions burn and rage
Till God's own Son with skill divine
The inward fire assuage.

We lick the dust, we grasp the wind,
And solid good despise;
Such is the folly of the mind
Till Jesus make us wise.

Watts.

#### CONSOLATION IN STORE FOR PRESENT SUFFERERS. LUKE VI.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed, be ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God.
21 Blessed are ye, that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.

Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did

their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But wee unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies,

do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which

despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee: and of him

that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

## FORGIVENESS OF AN ENEMY PROVES THE TRUE

"Love your enemies," is the commandment of This merciful precept would dethe believer. serve our reverence, even if it came to us on the authority of an ordinary mortal. Enmity and persecution must ever be found among men, if this life is to prove to them a school of wisdom. which may fit them for a happier state of being. A perfect calm, the experienced navigator knows, is more dangerous than a hurricane; and, as in the natural, so a calm in the moral world might prove fatal to our best hopes. Were we surrounded by friends, then soothing consolation might lull our hearts to sleep, and we might neglect duty. The words of friends are not unfrequently but the reflection of our own thoughts, and from those we gain a very imperfect knowledge of ourselves. But the faults of which they fail to remind us, our enemy brings to our recollection without being importuned to render a service so important. Of these different expounders of character, neither is, perhaps, quite impartial. The former think too well; the latter too unkindly of what we do. By the enemy. however, we are so far favoured, that he makes

us know what was before concealed from our view, by undue indulgence, or by overweening selflove.

Evils tend to good. Does not enmity, as well as misfortune, teach us to conduct ourselves more prudently? Our passions are excited to try the strength of our patience, our philanthropy, and our courage. The persecution of man serves for an impressive exhortation to seek the protection of our Saviour, and our God. Without that, we could never reach the highest pitch of virtue, to which the Christian can soar; we could never prove ourselves capable of loving our enemies.

On a comprehensive view of the whole subject, it will be found that he who suffers from malignant foes, and treacherous friends, has greater opportunities for exercising the virtues of Christianity, than the rich and mighty man surrounded by friends and flatterers, whom no common ene-

my can venture to assail.

Those who are not tried, are not proved. The man who lives in his own family circle, possessed of ample means, and associated with friends and relatives, prepared to approve of all he does, may, enjoying undisturbed peace, believe himself a true follower of Jesus. The scene changed, pursued by envious adversaries, a mournful surprise is probably his, and he stands aghast, at seeing the weakness and impurity of his heart, when threatning danger fills him with dismay.

Wantonly to provoke enemies, is that which should be avoided. The tempest so raised, might become too powerful for us to strive against, and shipwreck would ensue. Desiring to be spared a trial so severe, let our cry rather be, "Lord, lead us not into temptation;" let us not provoke the envious to become our foes, lest we fail.

Notwithstanding our efforts to avoid strife and discord, should an enemy approach, we will hold ourselves ready to take his hand in the spirit of sincere reconciliation. Failing in this, should it be thy decree, that enemies we must have, we will then, regarding them as nauseous drugs, administered for our mental health, endeavour to turn them to a good account. Their calumnies, their intrigues, their frauds, while they cause distress, shall be rendered the means of bringing us nearer to heaven.

In this world, as in the regions of eternal darkness, the true follower of Jesus must expect to be pursued by fierce adversaries. Happily, he knows that he will have no enemies in heaven.

Holy, holy, and eternal Father, be thou but our

friend, and we thy feeble, but sincere worshippers, feel that we may serenely advance on the road of life, though the worldly-minded should frown as we proceed, and though numerous slanders should be launched against us, to disturb our peace. They must be pure in heart, who seek to convert their enemies into friends. Inspire us, Oh Jesus! divine comforter of man! with the patience and meekness necessary to act so glorious a part. In our hearts extinguish all emotions of revenge. Vengeance is thine, and thine alone; and not presuming to arrogate a divine attribute, to thee we commit our cause, and seek not to requite our foes with our own hands, for the wrongs we have sustained.

Grant, Oh Lord! that thy blessing may descend on our friends, and also on our enemies. Teach them to apply their hearts unto true wisdom. They are better known to thee than they can be to us. What glory shall we feel it, to place before thy throne, an enemy whom we have conquered by meekness and benefits, as a trophy of blessed religion. We feel, in this solemn moment, that moved by thee, we could approach our oldest. bitterest foe, with a heart disposed to reconciliation, and prepared to ask pardon for aught that we have done against him. But our oldest enemy may be no longer in the land of the living; why then, we will approach in kindness the man who has last outraged our feelings. Do our hearts throb at the thought! Oh! thou who willest "peace on earth, and good will toward men," be pleased to still each angry feeling, that yet exists in minds too prone to rebel against thy ordinances. In the fulness of thy compassionate love, subdue the rancour of our foes; but convert us too, that we may indulge resentful emotions no more. Grant us distinct manifestations of thy love, nor let these be withheld from our friends, nor even from those who still remain our enemies.

#### THE FOLLY OF WORLDLY CONTENTION.

Reflect on the small moment of those things which are the usual incentives to violence and contention. In the ruffled and angry hour, we view every appearance through a false medium. The most inconsiderable point of interest, or honour, swells into a momentous object; and the slightest attack seems to threaten immediate ruin. But after passion or pride has subsided, we look round in vain for the mighty mischiefs we dreaded. The fabric, which our disturbed imagination had reared, totally disappears. But, though the cause of contention has dwindled away, its consequences remain. We have alienated a friend; we have embittered an enemy; we have

sown the seeds of future suspicion, malevolence, or disgust. Suspend your violence, I beseech you, for a moment, when causes of discord occur. Anticipate that period of coolness, which, of itself, will soon arrive. Allow yourselves to think, how little you have any prospect of gaining by fierce contention; but how much of the true happiness of life you are certain of throwing away. Easily, and from the smallest chink, the bitter waters of strife are let forth; but their course cannot be foreseen; and he seldom fails of suffering most from their poisonous effect, who first allowed them to flow.

But gentleness will, most of all, be promoted by frequent views of those great objects which our holy religion presents. Let the prospects of immortality fill your minds. Look upon this world as a state of passage. Consider yourselves as engaged in the pursuit of higher interests; as acting now under the eye of God, an introductory part to a more important scene. Elevated by such sentiments, your minds will become calm and sedate. You will look down, as from a superior station, on the petty disturbances of the world. They are the selfish, the sensual, and the vain, who are most subject to the impotence of passion. They are linked so closely to the world; by so many sides they touch every object, and every person around them, that they are perpetually hurt, and perpetually hurting others. But the spirit of true religion removes us to a proper distance from the grating objects of worldly contention. It leaves us sufficiently connected with the world, for acting our part in it with propriety; but disengages us from it so far, as to weaken its power of disturbing our tranquillity. It inspires magnanimity; and magnanimity always breathes gentleness. It leads us to view the follies of men with pity, not with rancour; and to treat, with the mildness of a superior nature, what in little minds would call forth all the bitterness of passion.

Aided by such considerations, let us cultivate that gentle wisdom which is, in so many respects, important both to our duty and our happiness. Let us assume it as the ornament of every age, and of every station. Let it temper the petulance of youth, and soften the moroseness of old age. Let it mitigate authority in those who rule, and promote deference among those who obey.

Blair.

## MORNING.-JUNE 6.

#### THE VANITIES OF RICHES.

Why doth the man of riches grow
To insolence and pride,
To see his wealth and honours flow
With every rising tide?

[Why doth he treat the poor with scorn, Made of the self-same clay, And boast as tho' his flesh was born Of better dust than they?]

Not all his treasure can procure
His soul a short reprieve,
Redeem from death one guilty hour,
Or make his brother live.

Life is a blessing can't be sold, The ransom is too high; Justice will ne'er be bribed with gold That man may never die.]

He sees the brutish and the wise, The tim'rous and the brave, Quit their possessions, close their eyes, And hasten to the grave.

Watts.

CHRIST PROVIDES FOR HIS FOLLOWERS. LUKE IX.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preach-

ing the gospel, and healing every where.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others,

that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things? and he desired to see him.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called

11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of

God, and healed them that had need of healing,

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said. We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except

we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a com-

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

OUR DAILY BREAD IS ALL WE NEED SOLICIT OF THIS WORLD'S FOOD.

For temporal wants we should have little care: but still, we are permitted to apply to our Lord that these may be supplied. "Give us this day our daily bread," is the supplication which our Saviour taught man to breathe, and many times have we uttered it from that period when we first learned to stammer out this model prayer of the Son of God: but seldom have we felt as we ought, what it was, for which we were praying: and still less frequently, after receiving what we asked, have we raised our souls with appropriate, grateful emotion to the giver of all good.

To thee, O God! the eyes of all earthly sufferers are turned. It is thy bounty gives them meat in due season; it is thy open hand that sa-

tisfies the desires of all that live.

Blameable in a high degree are they, who, possessing a moderate competency, humble though it may be, are bowed down by oppressive cares, while seeking their daily food, not compelled literally to obtain the first necessaries of life, by the sweat of their brow, who still repine, and feel no gratitude to their Maker.

If the course supposed be reprehensible, let us ask our hearts, have not we incurred a weight of guilt in deferring till to-day, to enter upon such a course of meditation? Happily we are at length awake to the value and importance of the bles-The former course of our education may, perhaps, in some degree, account for, and excuse our omission, and cause it to be overlooked by infinite mercy; but inwardly we feel that our negligence was sinful. Gratitude to the giver of all good, for mercies so great, is the least return we should make for bounty so large.

Let us daily make the nourishment we receive from a benign Providence the subject of our solemn meditations, and warmest acknowledgements. Musing on this will guard us against discontent and gloom, which, as men and as Christians, we ought to repel; extravagant wishes, and weak cupidity, will thus be kept down, and our prosperity, smaller or greater as it may prove, will be more truly enjoyed, from the reflection, that it affords us opportunities for cultivating our minds, and studying our duty. It further, in addition to other enjoyments, enables us to performa cts of charity, which, regarded as a lending to the Lord, will one day be requited with large interest. So favoured for ourselves, we can look forward to the future without anxiety; and it is only when we hear the sighs of poverty and suffering breathed at our doors by others, that wanting ability to assuage their sorrows, we feel that we ourselves are poor.

The dull insensibility of which we stand selfconvicted, was a serious offence against our eternal Father, receiving as we did the rich gifts which he bestowed through a series of years, without emotions of thankfulness, as if they had been prepared by ourselves, and were ours of right.

Never again let such want of reflection come over us; never again, while we live, let us coldly receive the favours of a gracious Deity. Praying with earnest devotion, that he will "give us our daily bread," we must not fail to offer to him the homage of our gratitude, when we have received

it in answer to our prayers.

And that which may be vouchsafed to us, let it ever be our care, when it is in our power, to dispense to others. In this we shall imitate the great Captain of our faith. Our Saviour fed the hungry multitude. This was effected by a miracle, and the bread supplied to their bodily wants, he likened to himself, given to relieve their spiri-He described himself as the living bread sent down from heaven.

While praying to God that he will give us our daily sustenance, we are not to suppose that, at our bidding, a miracle is to be worked in our favour, like that which, for a great purpose, was witnessed when our Lord was on earth. We are not to hope that it will come to us exactly when required, without any preparation on our part. That we may not solicit in vain, we must be industrious, temperate, and frugal. Hitherto, in these matters, we have been less careful than we ought to have been. For this, for all our transgressions, we humbly implore the pardon of the God to whom our prayers ascend. We are as children spoiled by former indulgences, which we failed sufficiently to appreciate. It shall not be so for the time to come. Should mercy spare our lives, it will be our care to furnish goodly evidence of our progress in grace, by proving that our gratitude is no longer asleep, while thou art bountiful. Devoted to thee, all the benefits we may share, we humbly hope, will be so used, that they shall tend to thy glory; and our great aim be the purifying our hearts, and better regulating our actions to become worthy of thy continued love. May the perception of that love govern all our thoughts, words, and deeds, in happy days, and remain with us to soothe, and cheer our spirits in the season of adversity. May it console in misfortune; and comfort us when departing from this life, by imaging to us the death of our Redeemer on the cross, who suffered, that we might become the heirs of a bli-ful immortality.

A VIRTUOUS LIFE WILL BE APPRECIATED EVEN IN FUTURE AGES.

Amongst the heathen, what eulogies do we find in the honour of Socrates, Aristides, Cato, Epictetus !- the last of whom, though but a poor slave, had yet such a veneration paid to his memory, that his earthen lamp, by which he was wont to study, was, after his death, sold for three thousand

Nor was it otherwise among the Christians; the apostles were but poor fishermen, illiterate mechanics; many of the martyrs were but of mean condition, much opposed and persecuted in the world; and yet these men, during the time of their lives, were highly reverenced among those that knew them; and since their deaths, what can be more glorious than that renown which they have amongst men, when the greatest kings and princes will not mention their names without reverence; when whole nations are willing to set apart, and to observe solemn days and festivals in honour of their memories?

And as it hath always been thus formerly, so I appeal to every man's breast, whether it be not so now. Let them but examine what their inclinations are towards such persons whom they believe to be truly virtuous; not only to such among them as are their particular acquaintance and friends, but likewise to strangers, nay, to very enemies, whether they do not esteem and love them, and will well to them.

It cannot be denied, but that there are too many in the world, who propose to themselves such ways and courses for the promoting of their honour and reputation, as are quite opposite to that which I have now been discoursing of; namely, profaneness, and contempt of religion, despising that which other men stand in awe of; by which they think to get the reputation of wit and courage; of wit, by pretending to penetrate more deeply into the nature of things, and to understand them better than others do; not to be so easily imposed upon as other credulous people are: of courage, by not being so easily scared at the apprehension of danger at a distance.

But the plain truth is, such persons do hereby prove them-

selves to be both fools and cowards.

Fools-In mistaking their great interest, in making choice of such means, as can never promote the end they design. There being no kind of men that are more exposed (whatsoever they themselves may think of it) than those that seek for credit by despising of religion. Fools, in venturing their future estates and their souls upon such hazards, as all mankind would cry out upon for the most palpable folly and madness, if they should do the like towards their temporal estates, or their bodies.

Cowards-In being more afraid of little dangers, because they are present, than of greater, because they are future, and

at a distance.

Bishop of Chester, 1683.

### EVENING.-JUNE 6

GOD'S GLORY BURSTS THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT.

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more: I mourn, but ye woodlands I mourn not for you; For morn is approaching, your charms to restore, Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glitt'ring with dew. Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn, Kind nature the embryo blossom will save; But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn! O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!

'Twas thus, by the glare of false science betrayed,
That leads but to bewilder, and dazzles to blind,
My thoughts wont to roam from shade onward to shade,
Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
"O pity, great Father of Light," then I cried,
"Thy creature who fain would not wander from thee!

"Thy creature who fain would not wander from thee!

Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride,

From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free."

And darkness and doubt are now flying away,
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn,
So breaks on the traveller faint and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
On the cold cheek of death, smiles and roses are blending,

Beattie.

## THE WORKS OF GOD MORE THAN CAN BE NUMBERED. PSALM XL.

And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

4 Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou

not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

## THE STUPENDOUS MAGNITUDE AND GRANDEUR OF GOD'S CREATION.

The Deity is seen in the creation. "Consider the works of God," is the exhortation given by Solomon. It cannot be too earnestly repeated; on the works of God the devout Christian feels that he cannot too often meditate.

We will, then, apply ourselves to act on the wise counsel of the royal sage, and in the peaceful hours of evening, exercise ourselves in contemplations on the heavens above us.

And, among the works of the Almighty, how wonderful are the mysterious visitors known to us as comets! Praise be to the Eternal, those times are gone by, to return no more, when the appearance of such luminous celestial bodies was supposed to be portentous of evil. They are no longer regarded as the heralds of calamity, the messengers of woe. By science we are now informed that they are opaque bodies, some of them larger than our own planet, and having a regular motion of their own. By the naked eye we can seldom see comets in the sky; but aided by the powers of the telescope, in almost every year some may be discovered, which do not come sufficiently near the earth we inhabit, to be viewed without such assistance. Their longer or shorter trains are turned from the sun. Rapid as their flight is, speedily as they disappear, the greater number of them require a long series of years to elapse before they can be seen again in our solar system. The orbits of many comets have been calculated by astronomers, who have ascertained that seventy years, or a still more extended, period is necessary to complete their revolution-but the longest hitherto known, will not return till after five hundred and seventy-five years have run their course.

Let the awe-stricken, admiring spirit contemplate the immense space which these bodies must traverse, moving with that rapidity which marks their progress. As the motion of some comets is confined to an oblong orbit, and as some of them turn round near the sun which illumines our globe, and thence commence their vast career to the other extremity of their appointed track, it has been conjectured that, possibly, they may revolve round another sun. But at what an enormous-what an astounding, unimaginable distance, must that sun be removed from ours! Immense, however, as it may be, we have no grounds for believing that even a second sun is the last in the stupendous system. May it not be, that thousands of suns, with their planets and orbits, exist beyond that?

Comets have a much more important mission entrusted to them than that which formerly was supposed to be the cause of their visits; something more momentous than the mere announcement of a plague, a war, or a court mourning. What arrogant folly, on the part of the littleminded beings falsely called the great, was that which caused the last ridiculous supposition to gain ground!

When such the astonishing might of that Being who first breathed the breath of life into our nostrils, when such the magnitude of that space which he fills -how will it be, if revelling in the bliss of an eternal life, its true worshippers are permitted to travel on the wings of fast-flying stars, through the great expanse of heaven, discovering, at each new advance, new worlds, unseen, unheard of before, as in this world we pass over million of blades of grass, of which we had no previous knowledge! It may be, that the exalted and clear-sighted spirit will discover in each spot fresh marvels, additional wonders, prepared by the Creator's immortal hand, while the whole space, to our present view immense, which our eyes can only survey through a telescope, will appear, in comparison with the illimitable range then made known to us, but a span. How sublime, how transporting is the thought, that there, accompanied by angels, whose brighter intelligence would inform us, we may dart, like a meteor, from one throne, from one glory of God to another! Eternally inquiring, we should be eternally gaining new proofs of the love and wisdom of the Almighty; continually perceiving new systems, new worlds, and new heavens, open to the unclouded eye of the joyous spirit intent upon gaining further knowledge of its God. Gazing on a spectacle so magnificent, we may imagine that millions of hymns of praise will ascend to the throne of the Most High: these being but the commencement of a neverending jubilee.

But around us do we really imagine the strains of the blessed will be heard? Let us not forget, alas! that, as yet, around us there are still many demons, asleep or awake;—earth their dreary dungeon. Still, chained to that, we feel it should be our part to repent our sins, to pray forgiveness from above, and to implore the protection of our Lord, while we resign ourselves to unconscious sleep! But heart-cheering hope is ours. Soon will death break our present fetters, and then, O Lord our God! we hope, from thy mercy to wake to a real life; we hope to live evermore to thee.

THE LESSON TAUGHT BY THE WONDERS OF CREATION.

O ye heavens, whose azure arches rise immensely high, and stretch unmeasurably wide: stupendous amphitheatre! amidst whose vast expansive circuit orbs of the most dreadful grandeur are perpetually running their amazing races: unfathomable depths of æther! where worlds unnumbered float, and, to our limited sight, worlds unnumbered are lost:—He, who adjusted your dimensions with his span, and formed the magnificent structure with his word; He was once wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger:—that the benefits accruing to his people, through his most meritorious humiliation, might have no other measure of their value than immensity; might run parallel, in their duration, with eternity.

Ye stars, that beam with inextinguishable brilliancy through the midnight sky; oceans of flame and centres of worlds, though seemingly little points of light:—He who shone with essential effulgence innumerable ages before your twink-ling tapers were kindled! and will shine with everlasting majesty and beauty, when your places in the firmament shall be known no more: He was involved, for a many years, in the deepest obscurity; lay concealed in the contemptible city Nazareth; lay disguised under the mean habit of a carpenter's son:—that he might plant the heavens, as it were, with new constellations, and array these clods of earth, these houses of clay, with a radiancy far superior to yours: a radiancy, which will adorn the very heaven of heavens, when you shall vanish away like smoke, or expire as momentary sparks from the smitten steel!

Comets, that sometimes shoot into the illimitable tracts of æther, farther than the discernment of our eye is able to follow; sometimes return from the long, long excursion, and sweep our affrighted hemisphere with your enormous fiery train; that sometimes make near approaches to the sun, and burn almost in his immediate beams; sometimes retire to the remotest distance, and freeze, for ages, in the excessive rigours of winter: He, who at his sovereign pleasure withdraws the blazing wonder, or leads forth the portentous stranger to shake terror over guilty kingdoms; He was overwhelmed with the most shocking amazement, and plunged into the deepest anxiety; was chilled with apprehensions of fear, and scorched by the flames of avenging wrath, that I, and other depraved rebellious creatures, might not be eternally agitated with the extremes of jarring passions, opposite, yet on either side tormenting, - far more tormenting to the soul than the severest degrees of your heat and cold to the human sense.

Ye planets, that, winged with unimaginable speed, traverse the regions of the sky; sometimes climbing millions and millions of miles above, sometimes descending as far below the great axle of your motions; ye that are so minutely faithful to the vicissitudes of day and night, so exactly punctual in bringing on the changes of your respective seasons: He who launched you at first from his mighty arm, who continually impels you with such wonderful rapidity, and guides you with such perfect regularity; who fixes "the habitation of his holiness and his glory," infinite heights above your scanty rounds; He once became a helpless infant; sojourned in our inferior world; fled from the persecutor's sword, and wandered as a vagabond in a foreign land, that he might lead our feet into the way of peace, that he might bring us aliens near to God, bring us exiles home to heaven.

Thou sun, inexhausted source of light, and heat, and comfort! who, without the assistance of any other fire, sheddest day through a thousand realms; and not confining thy munificence to realms only, extendest thy enlightening influences to surrounding worlds: prime cheerer of the animal, and great enlivener of the vegetable tribes! so beautiful in thyself, so beneficial in thy effects, that erring heathens addressed thee with adorations, and mistook thee for their Maker!—He, who filled thy orb with a profusion of lustre; before whom thy meridian splendours are but a shade—He divested himself of his all-transcending distinctions, and drew a veil over the effulgence of his divinity; that by speaking to us, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, he might dispel our

intellectual darkness. His "visage was marred," and he became the scorn of men, the outcast of the people, that, by this manifestation of his unutterably tender regard for our welfare, he might diffuse many a gleam of joy through our dejected minds: that, in another state of things, he might even our fallen nature with the honours of that magnificent luminary, and give all the righteous to shine forth as the

sun, in the kingdom of their Father.

Thou moon, that walkest among a host of stars, and in thy lucid appearance art superior to them all; fair ruler of the night! sometimes half restoring the day with thy waxing brightness; sometimes waning into dimness, and scarcely scattering the nocturnal gloom; sometimes covered with sackcloth, and alarming the gazing nations:—He, who dresses thy opaque globe in beaming but borrowed silver; He, whose dignity is unchangeable, underived, and all his own; He vouchsafed to wear a body of clay; He was content to appear as in a bloody eclipse, shorn of his resplendent beams, and surrounded with a night of horror, which knew not one reviving ray!—Thus has he empowered his church, and all believers, to tread the moon under their feet. Hence, inspired with the hope of brighter glory, and of more enduring bliss, are they enabled to triumph over all the vain anxieties, and vainer amusements of this sublunary, precarious, mutable world.

Hervey.

## MORNING.-JUNE 7.

TRUST IN GOD.

Judge me, Lord, in righteousness; Plead for me in my distress; Good and merciful Thou art, Bind this bleeding broken heart; Cast me not despairing hence, Be thy love my confidence.

Send thy light and truth to guide Me, too prone to turn aside, On thy holy hill to rest, In thy tabernacles blest; There, to God, my chiefest joy, Praise shall all my powers employ.

Why, my soul, art thou dismay'd? Why of earth or hell afraid? Trust in God;—disdain to yield, While o'er thee he casts his shield, And his countenance divine Sheds the light of heaven on thine.

Montgomery.

THE DEITY, PROVOKED, MAY REFUSE TO HEAR THE CRY OF SINNERS. EZEKIEL, VIII.

7 ¶ And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door:

9 And he said unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in

his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord seeth us not: the Lord hath forsaken the earth

us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.

13 ¶ He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou

shalt see greater abominations that they do.

14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house, which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

15 ¶ Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abomi-

nations than these.

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house; and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five-and-twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

17 ¶ Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

18 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

THE MEANS OF GRACE WITHIN OUR REACH SHOULD SAVE US FROM VAIN TERRORS.

Man is ill at ease in this world. It is not his home. "I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest," is the language of a wanderer, recorded in scripture. It is that which expresses what each of us feel. We long for recreation, but find none. We seek a spot where we may enjoy peace; but the search is vain. As the bewildered traveller, who has toiled through dust, danger, and privation, longs for his home, thus do we, on the road of life, sigh for peace, and calm repose, without finding it. We feel restless and disturbed at the view forced upon us of the evils impending over us, of the sorrows we may know, of the temptations, dangers, and sufferings which we must encounter as we proceed on our prescribed journey. Now rise before us, in appalling strength, the bitter disappointments, the blighted hopes reserved for mortals. Acute is the pain we feel, when those whom we have zealously laboured to serve, turn round upon us, and requite our disinterested love with heartless ingratitude. Such mortifications are distressing: but, where the cruelty or misconduct of others has not disturbed our peace, the weakness and pusillanimity of our own hearts, unenlightened by rays of celestial love, have rendered us miserable.

Let us confer with each other, and does not our experience bear witness, that often we have suffered discontent, ill humour, and exaggerated fears of what might chance, at some future day, to betray us into fearful errors, which have again proved the source of further despondency and regret.

The world into which we are thrown, is a never-ending contest. Here, we, and all that we meet, are constantly struggling, fighting, pursuing, seeking, and desiring. The heart, never satisfied with all it can realise, is never free from

care.

But if it has been the will of the Most High to place us in this scene of continual agitation, let us, with unaffected thankfulness, acknowledge that he has placed within our reach the means for relieving ourselves from most of its evils and annoyances. By faith, and love, and holy confidence in him,—though to be spared the necessity of entering into the strife is impossible—we may rise superior to its dangers, and more especially be guarded against fatal temptation.

We are not then to go on repining from day to day, at the dispensations of Providence. We are not to open our mouths only to breathe dissatisfaction at what we behold, but we are cheerfully to move forward, and bear ourselves courageously in the fight, animated by the hope that, since it is the will of the Lord which has ordered things as they are, by the steady and resolute discharge of our duty, we shall

eventually gain his favouring smile.

"But how,"—the fainting spirit may enquire, "how shall I be able to do it?" Be still, my soul, be cheerful, and remember all the sufferings that we are capable of knowing in this transitory state of being, are not worth a moment's thought, when compared with that undying glory which will one day be the rich reward of proved virtue. A day will come, and, it may be, soon, when thy yearnings for peace and happiness shall be gratified; when, ripening into maturity, thou shalt be endowed with a more perfect knowledge than has yet been thine; all that has been mysterious shall be unveiled, and that which is now obscure, fully revealed to the eye of the true believer; the humble followers of a crucified Savlour. The arduous toil, the thorny path, that leads to heaven, will soon only be looked upon as among "the things that were." The days of thy grief will close, and thou mayest reach joy and repose, more speedily than thou hast suffered thyself to imagine.

Such a prize is worth contending for. It will well repay all the exertions which are necessary

to bring it within our reach.

What do we here look upon and admire, which will not fade into insignificence, if compared with the blessedness of heaven? Though diversified nature gives observant man a sublime idea of the powers of the Deity, "should we take the wings of the morning, or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea," in all her most magnificent objects, among all her loveliest varieties, we could find nothing like the living glory which awaits the spirits of the just made perfect. From the walks of nature, let us withdraw ourselves, to seek the Almighty in his own abode. Passing from the outer court of the world, let us seek him on his throne, in his celestial palace, and there contemplating the wondrous plans of immortal Wisdom. offer the pure homage of sincere gratitude for all we have received, more especially the soulgladdening revelation of what has been prepared for us beyond the grave. To this point we must steadily and untiringly, from day to day, address ourselves. Let vain apprehensions be dismissed. Such are not for those whose trust is in God.

Yet, difficulties lie in our way. Deign, then, O God! to guide our steps towards that great and glorious consummation, which has been promised to those who love thee. Assist us by thy Holy Spirit, that when we are on the point of despairing, from a sense of our own weakness, all heaven may open before us, and animate our minds to new efforts in the cause of our salvation. Still unweariedly we would fain pursue the course marked out for us to tread, till thou in mercy shalt call us hence, to thy eternal sabbath.

Humbly, O Lord! we call on thee, to listen to our earnest supplications. Mighty as is the boon we solicit, we inwardly feel assured that it will not be denied. It is thine to increase our hopes. On thee alone we place our reliance. No tribulation, no toil, no bodily suffering, and no time, shall induce us to forsake thee, Eternal Father! Living. we will live to thee, and dying, death will have no terrors for us, who feel that we die in the Lord.

#### DUTIES UNDER THE PRESSURE OF AFFLICTION.

To receive it with all humility, as reached out unto us from the hand, or permission at least, of Almighty God. There were a sort of philosophers that thought it a virtue to put on a resolved contempt of all crosses and afflictions; not to be moved at all with them, but to bear them with a stout apathy: this is not the temper that becomes a Christian; it is all one, as if a child should resolve to receive the corrections of his father with a stubborn resolution not to care for them, or to be affected with them: such a stubbornness under affliction renders it unuseful to its end, and commonly provokes the great Lord and Father of Spirits totally to reject such a mind, or to master it with sharper and severer and multiplied afflictions, till it yield, and till that uncircumcised heart be humbled, and accept of the punishment of its iniquity.

To receive it with patience and subjection of mind; and without contesting with Almighty God, charging his providence with error or injustice, or swelling and storming against the affliction, or the divine dispensation that sends it: This hath two singular benefits; first, it renders the affliction itself more easy and tolerable; secondly, it is one of the readiest ways to shorten or abate it: for as yielding and humble submission to the hand of God, so patience and submission of will to the divine dispensation are two of the great ends and business of affliction, which, when attained by it, it hath performed

a great part of its errand for which it was sent.

To return unto God, that afflicteth or permitteth it: affliction misseth its end and use when it drives a man from his God, either to evil or unlawful means, or to shift and hide himself, or keep at a distance from him; and as it loseth its end, so it is contrary to its natural effect, at least where it meets with a nature of any understanding and ingenuity. "In their affliction they will seek me earnestly." God Almighty sends afflictions like messengers, to call home wandering souls; and if a man will shift away, get farther off, and estrange himself more from him that strikes him, he will either send more important messengers, afflictions of a greater magnitude, to call and fetch him, as want and famine did the young prodigal in the gospel; or, which is far worse, let him go without farther seeking him: whereas, the man that, by affliction, as it were, at the first call, comes home to God, or gets nearer to him, for the most part prevents severer monitors, and renders his suffering more short, or at least more easy, by drawing near to God, the fountain of peace and deliverance.

And if the affliction befalls such a man that hath not estranged himself from Almighty God, nor departed from him in any greater offences or backslidings, yet affliction is not without its end or use, even to such a man. Thou hast walked closely in the duties towards God, hast depended upon him, approved thyself in his sight; yet is it not possible that thy faith, industry, obedience, dependance, may be more constant, more firm? If it may be, as sure it may be, then though affliction solicit not thy return to him from whom thou hast not departed, yet it solicits thy improvement.

To pray unto God: and this is the most natural effect of affliction, especially if it be severe and eminent. In the storm the sailors call every one upon his God; and the reason is, because, in such a season, a man's own shifts, the help and advice and assistance of friends, and other human confidence appear too weak and ineffectual; and therefore the man is driven to that which indeed is the unum magnam, namely, invocation of Almighty God, for help, support and comfort. It is therefore a sign of a desperate mind that will not come unto God in prayer, at least when afflictions grind him.

Sir M. Hale.

### EVENING.—JUNE 7.

#### THE WANDERER'S HOPE.

O Lord! another day is flown, And we, a lonely band, Are met once more before thy throne, To bless thy fostering hand.

And wilt thou bend a listening ear,
To praises low as ours?
Thou wilt! for Thou dost love to hear
The song which meekness pours.

And, Jesus, thou thy smiles will deign, As we before thee pray; For thou didst bless the infant train, And we are less than they.

O let thy grace perform its part, And let contention cease; And shed abroad in every heart Thine everlasting peace!

Thus chasten'd, cleansed, entirely thine, A flock by Jesus led; The Sun of holiness shall shine, In glory on our head.

And thou wilt turn our wandering feet, And thou wilt bless our way; Till worlds shall fade, and faith shall gree The dawn of lasting day.

H. K. White.

#### THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS THE WAYS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUS-NESS. PSALM V.

1 Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation.
2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee.

5 The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

7 But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

8 Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

#### THE PAINS AND DANGERS OF HUMAN LIFE.

The relenting tenderness of the Almighty is often conspicuous in the sacred book. There we read, "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return ye children of men." Between

the moment in which we sink to our nightly repose, and that in which we wake to a new morrow, how many of the sons of men who were turned to destruction, have been ordained to remain. It is calculated that, at least, thirty thousand persons must, in the ordinary course of nature, quit this earthly stage during the approaching night; must pass the awful line which separates time from eternity. Among them are many in the vigour of life, now full of intellect, while as many are born, whose fate it is to remain but a few moments in the world, to weep, and then expire. Even before we have closed the brief devotions in which we are now engaged, some hundreds of beings like ourselves, must breathe their last, while an equal number accomplish their advent into this strangely troubled scene.

In the same moment, the groans of the dying, and the wailing of the new-born are heard. Be ye welcome, little fellow creatures; but why is it that while you are crying at commencing a life, those also are sad who are on the point of quitting it. Such, be the cause what it may, is the fact; there is, however, this difference between the circumstances. The friends and relatives who watch the last sigh of the dying, are weeping and disconsolate, while those who hear your cries listen to them with smiles and rejoicing, and the more so the louder your plaintive strain is heard.

Poor children! Dear young new comers, gladly would we hail your advent with warmest congratulation; but looking at that world into which you have been introduced, we cannot but add our tears to yours. Your parents and nurses are glad to behold you; but their satisfaction is based on selfishness. Such, alas! is human nature, that selfishness prompts all we do. Men laugh, weep, fight, flatter, rob, give alms, and even rush into the arms of death, from selfishness. Your parents and friends promise themselves that you will prove the source of profit, comfort, or additional importance to them.

We will for a moment suppose, young strangers, that you are capable of understanding the language which friendly experience may address to you. Listen then, and in few words, your condition and prospects shall be explained. "Rely little, or rather not at all, on the duration of this life, which you have but commenced. Should you continue to be numbered among the living, one fourth of you will have passed away after the lapse of a few years, and half of that which constitutes your present form, will not remain by the time

you reach what will be called your twentieth year. Should Providence ordain for you a lengthened career, you will probably keep your birth-day some sixty times, and then, full of years, have only to look forward to repose in the grave.

"Do not suffer yourself to be deceived by the captivating aspect which circumstances may wear in the first years of your progress. You will, it may be expected, be tenderly nursed and indulged, as if your life were of great importance to the world. You will then be ejected from the lap, and set to walk on the ground. As you advance, the indulgence shewn to you will grow less and less. By degrees, your parents, relatives, and kindest friends, will be separated from you by misfortune or death, or become old and poor, sordid or surly.

"Expect not that ease and enjoyment are to be yours, from year to year. Abundance of work is in store for you, and as you add to your days, you will be expected to labour both in body and mind. There are already task-masters prepared to furnish you with occupation, and others before you reach old age, will be born, who will cause you to shed more tears than you are now capable of imagining could ever fall from human eyes, though you have already commenced weeping at your present reception.

"Pain will soon make you restless; wants will oppress you. You will become acquainted with hunger, thirst, and other bodily requirements. Beloved little friends, would to heaven that these were all! Thrice happy were your lot, if, beside, you were not fated to know the awful pangs which grow on uncontrouled passion; on the mind being seduced to sin, and tortured by the stings of a guilty conscience. At present, all you have to do is to sleep and to cry, and this, alas! is the happiest portion of our career; or at least that period of human existence, which is most free from pain.

"Could the voice which now addresses you, intelligibly communicate all the sufferings, the diseases, the accidents, the mortifications, the alarms, that await you, as you pass through life, still more loudly would you weep, as assuredly you would have more cause, than you now do on the bosoms of your fond mothers.

"But this, at least, we may hope, in early childhood, you will clearly understand, the worst evil that can overtake you is, that you should become the servants of sin. Better, far better were it for you that you should never have been born. To those of you, who, by the holy rites of baptism, are devoted to God and his Son, the Redeemer Jesus, the contest with sin may not prove too great for your strength; but you must ever remember, that if much is given from above, much

will be expected.

"Thus telling you the prospects of your life, we but recount the history of ours. We are, in truth, even now living in a state of childhood; in what, in common parlance, is termed advanced life. May we increase spiritually, as you are likely to do bodily; and Oh! that we may all one day meet in a state of perfection! May the Eternal vouchsafe to us the joy of assembling round his throne of glory, and forbid that any of us shall be cast out from his presence, and doomed to mourn the wrath of an offended God, in that awful abode, where utter darkness prevails, and where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for ever.

#### TURN FROM SIN.

Well, Sirs, look inwards now, and tell me, how are your hearts affected with those offers of the Lord? You hear what is his mind: he delighteth not in your death; he calls to you, Turn, turn: it is a fearful sign if all this move thee not, or if it do but half move thee; and much more, if it make thee more careless in thy misery, because thou hearest of the mercifulness of God. The working of the medicine will partly tell us whether there be any hope of the cure. O what glad tidings would it be to those that are now in hell, if they had but such a message from God! what a joyful word would it be to hear this, "Turn and live!" Yea, what a welcome word would it be to thyself, when thou hast felt the wrath of God but an hour! Or, if after a thousand or ten thousand years torment, thou couldst but hear such a word from God, "Turn and live;" and yet wilt thou neglect it, and suffer us to return without our errand.

#### UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE.

Mr. Ashburner the elder, went to London on Tuesday se'nnight in perfect health and in high spirits, so as to be remarkably cheerful; and was brought home in a hearse the Friday following. Soon after his arrival in town, he complained of an acute pain in his elbow, then in his shoulder, then in both shoulders; was blooded; took two doses of such medicine as an apothecary thought might do him good; and died on Thursday in the morning at ten o'clock. When I first heard the tidings I could hardly credit them; and yet have lived long enough myself to have seen manifold and most convincing proofs that neither health, great strength, nor even youth itself, afford the least security from the stroke of death. It is not common however for men at the age of thirty-six to die so suddenly. I saw him but a few days before, with a bundle of gloves and hatbands under his arm, at the door of Geary Ball, who lay at that time a corpse. The following day I saw him march before the coffin, and lead the procession that attended Geary to the grave. He might be truly said to march, for his step was heroic, his figure athletic, and his countenance as firm and confident as if he had been born only to bury others, and was sure never to be buried himself. Such he appeared to me, while I stood at the window and contemplated his deportment; and then he died. Cowper.

## MORNING.-JUNE 8.

#### THE GOOD MAN.

Who is the honest man?—
He that doeth still, and strongly good pursue—
To God, his neighbour, and himself, most true;
Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin, or wrench from giving all their due.

Whose honesty is not
So loose or easy that a ruffling wind
Can blow away, or glittering look it blind
Who rides his sure and even trot,
While the world now rides by, now lags behind.

Who, when great trials come,
Nor seeks nor shuns them, but doth calmly stay,
Till he the thing and the example weigh;
All being brought into a sum,
What place or person calls for he doth pay.

Whom none can work or woo,
To use in any thing a trick or sleight,
For above all things he abhors deceit.
His words, and works, and fashion, too,
All of a piece, and all are clear and straight.

Who never melts or thaws
At close temptations. When the day is done,
His goodness sets not, but in dark can run,
The sun to others writeth laws,
And is their virtue: Virtue is his sun.

Who, when he is to treat
With sick folks, women, those whom passions sway,
Allows for that, and keeps his constant way,
Whom others' faults do not defeat;
But, though men fail him, yet his part doth play.

Whom nothing can procure,
When the wide world runs bias, from his will
To writhe his limbs; and share, not mend, the ill.
This is the mark-man safe and sure,
Who still is right, and prays to be so still.

George Herbert .- Written 1629.

GOD WILL DEAL WITH MEN ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS, ROMANS II.

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according

to truth against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest

up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:
7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile;
13 For there is no respect of persons with God.

THOUGH MEN PROVE UNGRATEFUL, THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD PERSEVERE IN DOING GOOD.

Is it for man to doubt the wisdom of Omniscience? Assuredly not. "He that hath planted the ear shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" Yes, Oh Lord, thou hearest and seest thy creatures everywhere, and that thought reanimates us, breathes comfort into our souls. While it refreshes, it cautions us not to go astray; it imparts indescribable relief, when the uncertain future, and the weakness of human nature, would disturb our souls with anxious fears.

For our guidance and support, this thought should be constantly cherished. The conviction that the Lord is always near; that the Holy One beholds our actions; that our virtuous deeds, when most unassuming, our sinful actions when most secret, are all known to him, is most wholesome. It should defend us against open as well as against insidious temptations; inspire joyful confidence, and keep alive pious zeal.

While we are sensible of this, we cannot greatly err. We dare not deliver ourselves up to the slavery of injustice, if we reflect that the Lord looks down upon us; sees our actions, and is aware of our designs. We are comforted, and cease to lament, that ingratitude in this world is generally the recompense of disinterested kindness; and that our best actions are often suspected to originate in the worst motives.

It, moreover, gives us resolution to strive against the obstacles which zeal in the cause of that which is good, must always find thrown in its way. When we are assured, and feel that the Lord knows our hearts, and that what passes within their most secret recesses, is apparent to him, we are consoled for the neglect, or the persecution of men. Should grief, too vast for utterance, press on the drooping heart; a grief which, in prudence,

cannot be breathed into a human ear; or, if we are exposed to dangers, which no mortal man can avert, how soothing is the Christian belief, that all is known to that Mighty Being who can as suage our sorrows, and give us instant security.

Such—such is the salutary influence of the certainty, that "He who planted the ear, hears, and that he who formed the eye, sees"—that the Lord, the Holy and the Mighty One, explores all the paths of the world, and knows all the doings of men.

May this belief, now ours, be daily strengthened in our minds, that we may never succumb to the tempting weaknesses which assail us, as we pass through a life, where vanity, ambition, and avarice, throw out their lures, to induce us to disregard the admonitions of conscience, and to sin against the laws of God.

May he deign to assist our efforts to improve our understandings, and confirm our resolutions, that we may not degrade ourselves by offering to him merely external worship; that we may not be disheartened by the thankless conduct of a wicked world, for services rendered in the spirit of brotherly love; nor resign ourselves to despondency in silent grief. Above this weakness, the blessed consciousness we have, shall move us to do whatever may be acceptable in the eye of God, not with a hope of obtaining man's applause, but because we feel that it is our duty so to act.

The same feeling shall prompt us rather to shun the gaze of mortals, while occupied with the labours of benevolence. To do good in secret, that he who sees all things, may, in his own time, reward us openly, shall be our ambition. We will delight to perform acts of charity, where no human eye can witness them; to avoid the praises of men; to suffer injustice without complaint, bear offence without resentment, and submit to hardship without a repining thought, or even without a hope that on earth our merits will ever be appreciated; to all this we shall be equal, sustained by the assurance that our doings must be known to God, and that he, for us, is all-sufficient.

No, never, never let us forget that the Lord of all mercy is always near his worshippers. However perplexed we find ourselves, we may rest satisfied that he cannot be far off. Let this soulsaving belief be firmly established in our minds. We will confirm it by anxious study, by carefully attending to the teachings of nature, by seeking instruction from the holy scripture, and, in ad-

dition to all these, by listening to the admonitions of our own hearts.

This thought should constantly remain with each of us,-"If God be for me, who can be against me?" Bearing that in mind, we shall resolutely go forward, doing all the good we can, however ungrateful the objects of our care may prove, and suffering with patient submission to the Divine will, such evils as may be permitted to overtake us by our Lord. The mighty God, who sees and hears all things, who witnesses our doings and our sufferings, cannot be deceived in regard to us; and we may therefore be bold in For all that we have attempted, for all that we have effected, for all that we have endured, we shall be more than compensated in heaven. That we have not abandoned our duty, but held fast to the right, confidently trusting in the goodness of the Governor of the universe, as did the Saviour of mankind, in his painful progress through this world, will give us the sweetest solace in our latter days, that can be known below; and we shall feel ourselves lifted above the cares of human life, by the prospect of joining our Redeemer in his celestial home, where praise, and honour, and peace, await all those who, undismayed by the storms to which they were exposed, have bravely persevered in striving, by good works, to gain from the bounty of their God, the reward of everlasting life.

THE WRONG DOER IS GENERALLY OVER-MATCHED BY HONESTY.

I have been always careful to mingle justice and honesty with my prudence; and have always esteemed prudence, acted by injustice and falsity the arrantest and most devilish practice in the world; because it prostitutes thy gift to the service of hell, and mingles a beam of thy divine excellence with an extraction of the devil's furnishing, making a man so much the worse by how much he is wiser than others. I always thought that wisdom, which in a tradesman, and in a politician, was mingled with deceit, falsity, and injustice, deserved the same name: only the latter is so much the worse, because it was of the more public and general concernment; yet because I have often observed great employments, especially in public affairs, are sometimes under great temptations of mingling too much craft with prudence, and then to miscall it policy I have, as much as may be, avoided such temptations, and if I have met with them, I have resolvedly rejected them.

I have always observed, that honesty and plain dealing in transactions, as well public as private, is the best and soundest prudence and policy, and commonly at the long-run over-matcheth craft and subtilty, for the deceived and deceiver are thine, and thou art privy to the subtilty of the one, and the simplicity of the other; and as thou, the great

moderator and observer of men, dost dispense success and disappointment accordingly

As humane prudence is abused, if mingled with falsity and deceit, though the end be never so good; so it is much more imbased, if directed to a bad end, to the dishonour of thy name, the oppression of thy people, the corrupting of thy worship or truth, or to execute any injustice towards any person. It hath been my care, as not to err in the manner, so neither in the end of the exercising of thy Providence. I have ever esteemed my prudence then best employed, when it was exercised in the preservation and support of thy truth, in the upholding of thy faithful ministers, in countermining, discovering, and disappointing the designs of evil and treacherous men, in delivering the oppressed, in righting the injured, in prevention of wars and discords, in preserving the public peace and tranquility of the people where I live, in the faithful advising of my prince, and in all those offices incumbent upon me by thy Providence, under every relation.

Whne my end was most unquestionably good, I ever then took most heed that the means were suitable and justifiable.

1. Because the better the end was, the more easily we are cosened into the use of ill means to effect it; we are too apt to dispense with ourselves in the practice of what is amiss, in order to the accomplishing of an end that is good; we are apt, while with great intention of mind we gaze upon the end, not to care what course we take, so as we attain it, and are apt to think that God will dispense with, or at least overlook the miscarriage in our attempts, if the end be good. 2. Because many times, if not most times, thy name and honour do more suffer by attempting a good end by bad means, than by attempting both a bad end, and also by bad means; for bad ends are suitable to bad means; they are alike; and it doth not immediately, as such, concern thy honour; but everything that is good, hath somewhat of thee in it, thy name, and thy nature, and thy honour is written upon it; and the blemish that is cast upon it, is in some measure cast upon thee; and the evil and scandal, and infamy, and ugliness that is in the means, is cast upon the end, and doth disparage and blemish it, and consequently it dishonours thee. To rob for burnt-offerings and to lie for God, is a greater disservice to thy Majesty, than to rob for rapine, or to lie for advantage.

Lord Hale.

## EVENING.—JUNE 8.

THE DYING SINNER'S LAMENT.

O Lord! my God, in mercy turn, In mercy hear a sinner mourn! To thee I call, to thee, I cry, O leave me, leave me not to die!

I strove against thee, Lord, I know, I spurn'd thy grace, I mock'd thy law; The hour is past—the day's gone by, And I am left alone to die.

O pleasures past! what are ye now But thorns about my bleeding brow? Sceptres that hover round my brain, And aggravate and mock my pain. For pleasure I have given my soul; Now, Justice, let thy thunders roll! Now, Vengeance! smile—and with a blow, Lay the rebellious ingrate low.

Yet Jesus, Jesus! there I'll cling, I'll crowd beneath his sheltering wing; I'll clasp the cross, and, holding there, Ev'n me, Oh bliss! his wrath may spare.

H. K. White.

#### PENITENCE AND RESIGNATION IN DEATH. LUKE, XXIII.

33 When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know

not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. 35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and

offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 ¶ And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward

of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To

day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was dark-

ness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, certainly this was a righteous man.

## DEATH NOT TO BE MET WITH INDIFFERENCE OR BRAVADO.

The dying Christian breathes his last in the hope of sleeping in the bosom of the Saviour. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," were the last words of Stephen, the first martyr; and when he had uttered them, he fell asleep. How differently, alas! do many enter the portals of death; how far, even at the awful moment of dissolution, are they from God, and his Son, Jesus Christ. Foolhardy, and frivolous in their pursuits, to the close of life, at the last we see no amendment, and we

behold them enter on the fearful road which leads to another world, wholly unprepared for the journey. What can be the cause of conduct so strangely at variance with common prudence? Possibly it arises from a certain bodily apathy, which renders men blind to their own condition, and precludes them from noting the fore-runners of death; or it may be a feature of their disease; a sluggish circulation of the blood, which can neither be moved quickly by joy, or arrested in its slow course by alarm. Among savage nations, intoxication and stupidity often produce an indifference to peril, which has been mistaken for Animals, children, madmen, and savages, generally appear to have no dread of death, because they know not what it is to die.

But in all situations of life, habit has much to do in forming the mind, and habit has been found to contribute materially to render men inaccessable to the fear of death. There are countries in which murders and suicide are almost of daily occurrence, and even children are so accustomed to look on death, that they witness the shedding of human blood, without horror. Education and the usages of civilised life, alter the character of human nature in some degree. Principles, inculcated almost while the infant draws sustenance from the bosom of his mother, and frequent exposure to danger, prevent men from looking at death as it ought to be viewed; as that event for which, above all others, it is most important to make preparation.

Immoderate ambition is among the principal vices which remain apparently in force, till the last hour of life; and it sometimes inspires its votaries with a desire to manifest contempt for death. In such cases, pride will even find aliment in that which terminates all its gigantic schemes, and lays their giddy framer low. Did the ambitious man but know that his decease would be considered a disgrace, or not be noticed at all, like others, he would, in all probability, shrink from encountering it. Deluded by the high sounding names of fame and glory, he loses sight of his own insignificance, and is content to throw himself into the open gulph. Excited passions frequently render men partly insensible, and slaves to a false code of honour. Even the most effeminate sensuality, sometimes, hurries its mean, degraded serfs, into scenes of danger, and betrays them to an untimely death.

But who can undertake the task of describing or enumerating all the delusions of lly? Who can even be competent to decide whether the preposterous principles on which men are carried away by the stream of fashion act, in exposing themselves to the most awful peril, prove, after all, their courage, or exhibit their wonder to the world. These delusions are most fatal in their In addition to the distress and character. ruin which they cause, it must not be forgotten that they cause a total estrangement from God, and numerous errors, all tending to endanger the soul, through the mind being injuriously misled to form erroneous conceptions of the nature of God, as also of the immortal spirit of the being created in God's own image. These are accompanied by feelings of indifference with regard to heaven, doubts of a future state, and disdain for the sacred information contained in the Bible. They generate or foster lamentable ignorance on matters of faith; encourage barbarous manners; lead to intercourse with the wicked, and produce a stupid insensibility, to the dread consequence of provoking the wrath of God. Such are the causes which may explain why the ungodly often advance, apparently, with unshaken courage, to risk the loss of life. He cannot be much afraid of death, because he does not acknowledge death as the wages of sin. Did he know with undoubted certainty, that an incorruptible Judge, an eternity, a hell, are waiting for him, when he departs this life; Oh, then! he would tremble with all the terror of a remorse-stricken culprit, on the scaffold; and would not think it beneath him to utter a fervent prayer for his departing soul, in the hour of dissolution; for, still to exist, and to be eternally happy, is as much his wish as it can be of all those who own they fear God, and who deem it necessary, with careful solemnity, to prepare themselves for death.

Away from us the idle bravado, the vain flourish which affects to make a jest of that which nature teaches the unsophisticated mind, to view with reverential awe. We will not suffer ourselves to meet death in a state of moral intoxication. We will not forget that it opens the gate which must admit us to the dread presence, which will pronounce a sentence that must doom us to happiness or woe; in a long—a never-ending future existence.

Sacred religion! guided by thy favouring light, we hope to find a just medium, between pusillanimous weakness, and fool-hardy insensibility. We would look forward to the grave as that to which all who live, must pass without fear, being com-

forted by the promises of God; but still without affecting to regard it as beneath the thought of a rational being. Death, the last enemy, is, and must be terrible to our nature. Our blessed Redeemer himself, confessed this, and wished the bitter cup might pass from him; but he did not merely look at death, but fixed his thoughts on that which was to follow. It is he who assists us to conquer those terrors, which otherwise would be, to the last degree, distressing. He spoke of the paradise to which by death he was hastening; applied himself to prayer, and derived consolation from the thought, that all his earthly cares were finished, and then committed, with perfect confidence, his holy spirit into the hands of his Almighty Father. Such be our end; such be our feelings, when our last hour arrives, assisted by thy Holy Spirit, Oh, blessed Lord! and if ere another day opens on the world, it is ours to sink in the icy embrace of death, receive us to thy mercy. Let thy grace be shewn in our salvation.

#### THE DANGER OF DEFERRING REPENTANCE.

To cast off all to a death-bed repentance, puts things upon a mighty hazard. And they have a great deal of reason to think so; for alas, how unfit are most men at such a time for so great and serious a work as repentance is, when they are unfit for the smallest matters: and how hard is it for any man, then to be assured of the truth and reality of his repentance, when there is no sufficient opportunity to make trial of the sincerity of it. I deny not the possibility of the thing; but it is much to be feared that the repentance of a dying sinner is usually but like the sorrow of a malefactor when he is ready to be turned off; he is not troubled that he hath offended the law, but he seize upon the sinner, and he feels himself dropping into destruction, no wonder if then the man's stomach come down, and he be contented to be saved; and seeing he must stay no longer in this world, be desirous to go to heaven rather than hell; and in order to do that, be ready to give some testimonies of his repentance: no wonder if when the rack is before him, this extort confession from him; and if in hopes of a pardon he make many large promises of amendment, and freely declare his resolution of a new and better life. But then it is the hardest thing in the world to judge, whether anything of all this that is done, under so great a fear and force, be real. For a sick man as he hath lost his appetite to the most pleasant meats and drinks, so likewise his sinful pleasures and fleshly lusts are at the same time nauseous to him, and for the very same reason; for sickness having altered the temper of his body, he hath not at that time any gust or relish for these things. And now he is resolved against sin, just as a man that hath no stomach is resolved against meat. But if the fit were over, and death would but raise his siege, and remove his quarters a little further from him, it is to be feared that his former appetite would soon return to him, and that he would sin with the same eagerness he did before. Besides, how can we expect that God should accept of his repentance at such a time; when we are conscious to ourselves, that we did resolve to put off our repentance till we could sin no longer. Can we think it fit for any man to say

thus to God in a dying hour; "Lord, now the world leaves me, I come to thee. I pray thee give me eternal life, who could never afford to give thee one good day of my life: grant that I may live with thee, and enjoy thee for ever, who could never endure to think upon thee. I must confess that I could never be persuaded to leave my sins out of love to thee, but know I repent of them for fear of thee: I am conscious to myself that I would never do anything for thy sake; but yet I hope thy goodness is such, that thou wilt forgive all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of my life, and accept of this forced submission which I now make to thee. I pray thee do not at last frustrate and disappoint me in this design which I have laid, of sinning while I live, and getting to heaven when I die. Surely no man can think it fit to say thus to God; and yet I am afraid this is the true interpretation of many a man's repentance who hath deferred it till he comes to die. I do not speak this to discourage repentance even at that time. It is always the best thing we can do. But I would by all means discourage men from putting off so necessary a work till then.

Dr. Tillotson.

### MORNING .- JUNE 9.

GOD IS LOVE.

Come, ye that love and fear the Lord, And lift your souls above; Let every heart and voice accord To sing that God is love.

This precious truth his word declares, And all his mercies prove; Jesus, the Gift of Gifts, appears To shew that God is love.

Behold, his patience lengthen'd out, To those who from him rove; And calls effectual reach their hearts To teach that God is love.

The work begun is carried on
By power from heaven above;
And every step, from first to last,
Proclaims that God is love.

O may we all, while here below,
This best of blessings prove;
Till warmer hearts, in brighter worlds,
Shall shout, that God is love.

Burder's Collection.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS WISDOM. PROVERBS, XIV.

26 In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.

29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but

he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

30 A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

31 He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous nath hope in his death.

33 Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.

## THE FEAR OF GOD SHOULD GOVERN OUR EVERY ACTION.

"The fear of the Lord gladdens the heart, and gives joy and delight eternal." Those things alone which are done or avoided, accelerated or prevented, thought or spoken, out of fear of the Lord, are acknowledged by our consciences as wise and beneficial in themselves, as tending to promote our real happiness. This morning, then, let us inquire whether the fear of God, the reverential awe of the Omnipresent, Holy, and Just One. who has deigned to write his commandments in our hearts, has a proper influence on all our actions. Let us ask ourselves whether by these we have been guided, while, studying to avoid evil, we performed our duty, and laboured to the best of our ability, properly to acquit ourselves in those offices to which we have been appointed by the Ruler of the universe; from dread of incurring his displeasure, or whether we were prompted by worldly-minded views, by selfishness and vanity; whether we have been governed by the desire of being seen and praised by men, or operated upon by dread of encountering their hostility? We must examine ourselves with strictness, to discover whether we possessed sufficient elevation of mind to disdain the panegyrics and applause of transgressors like ourselves, and to seek those profits and advantages alone, which we might seek and preserve a pure conscience.

Entering on this investigation, unhappily we cannot declare that we have attained such a height of virtue, that our hearts have been wholly cleansed from vanity, and rendered impervious to the love of gain; that we have been animated by the purest and noblest motives; that the best, the most irreproachable intentions were ours; and that the commandments of our God were always before our eyes, always present to our thoughts, when we exerted ourselves for the benefit of others, and acted what was deemed by men a noble and philanthropic part.